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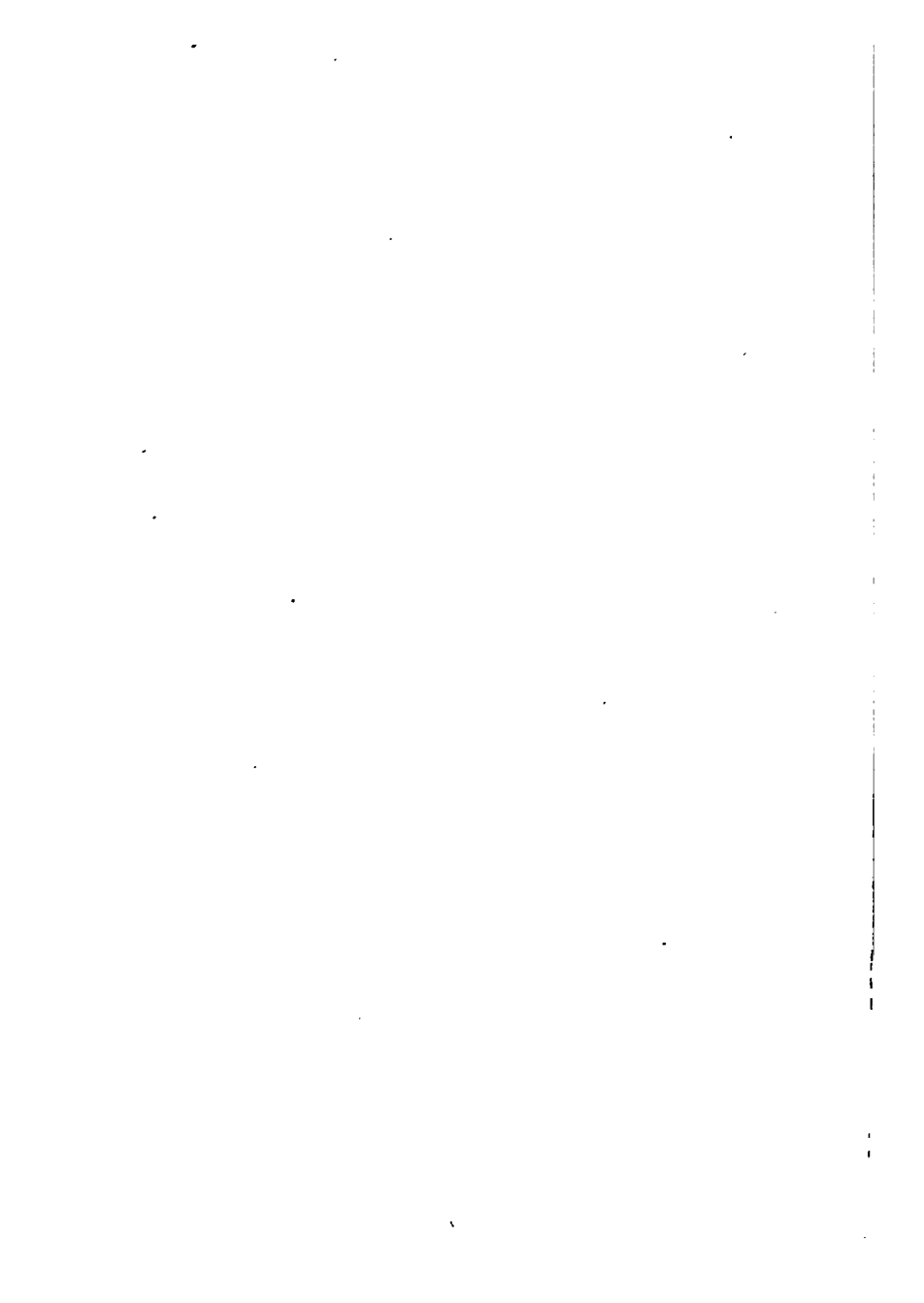




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THE
BOOK OF ENGLISH ELEGIES.

"Ah! Sir Launcelot," said he, "thou wert head of all Christian knights."

"And now I dare say," said Sir Bors, "that, Sir Launcelot, there thou liest that wert never matched of none earthly knight's hands; and thou wert the courtliest knight that ever bare shield; and thou wert the truest friend to thy lover that ever bestrode horse; and thou wert the truest lover, of a sinful man, that ever loved woman; and thou wert the kindest man that ever strook with sword; and thou wert the goodliest person that ever came among press of knights; and thou wert the meekest man, and the gentlest, that ever ate in hall among ladies; and thou wert the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spear in the rest."

(Morte d'Arthur.)

THE BOOK OF
ENGLISH ELEGIES.

EDITED BY

W. F. MARCH PHILLIPPS.



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P R E F A C E.

THE aim of the Editor of the following selection has been to collect in a popular form the best and most representative Elegiac Poems which have been written in the English tongue, during *past* generations, by inhabitants of these islands.

This plan excludes, on the one hand Welsh and Erse poetry, with which the Editor is unacquainted; and on the other American poetry, which is excluded because, although the greater American poets are as well known here as there, the Editor has found that it happens with Elegiac more than with other poetry, that some of the most beautiful or striking pieces have been written by men whose other works are quite forgotten, and whose names could never have been known out of their own country; and he therefore feels that a

collection of American elegies should be attempted only by an American.

By Elegiac Poetry is meant, not only Elegies on particular persons, but generally poems on the subject of Man's Mortality.

Besides the works of our greater poets, pieces by minor or unknown authors have been admitted, either for their intrinsic value, or because they seemed representatives of their age. On both these grounds, one poem in Latin has been admitted; that on Simon de Montfort. For the admission of Chevy Chase after much consideration, the Editor pleads that it is quite as much an Elegy as it is a battle-piece.

Much of our older English poetry would be read and loved (to their great profit) by many who now neglect it, were they not repelled by the obsolete words continually found in it, and also by the obsolete spelling of common words, which makes the reading of these old poems a weariness to a beginner.

If any one doubt this, let him ask among his own acquaintance how many have read even the

comparatively easy *older* ballad of Chevy Chase, and he will probably find that few have done so, the majority having contented themselves with the inferior later version because its English is easier.

In the present collection both spelling and words have been modernized where it seemed needful, wherever the verse allowed it; where the metre did not permit this the meanings of obsolete words are given on the margin.

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ELEGIAC POEMS,
MEDIÆVAL AND OF THE RENAISSANCE.





SAYINGS OF ALFRED, 1200.

* * * * *



HUS quoth Alfred,
" Many a man weeneth,
That he ween should not,
Long life.
But for him lies the snare ;
For when his life
Is best loved,
Then shall he leave
His own life.
For there is no wort waxing
In wood, nor afield,
That may this mortal
Forever uphold.
Knoweth no man the time
When he shall hence turn ;
Nor no man the end,
When he shall hence wend ;

God it alone knows,
Might's Lord,
When our life
Shall cease."

* * * * *

Thus quoth Alfred,
" All world's wealth
Shall come to nought,
And each kind's treasures
To dirt shall melt,
And our own life
Little while last.
For though one man
Wielded all the world,
And all the joy
That therein abideth,
He might not therewith his life
No while hold,
But all he shall leave
In a little space ;
And our bliss shall
To bale us bring,
But if we work
The will of Christ.
Now bethink we then ourselves,
Our life to lead

As Christ us 'ginneth teach,
Then may we ween
That He will us honour ;
For so said Solomon the wise
'The man that here well doth,
He cometh there he meed getteth,
On his life's end ;
He it shall find.'"

(Early English Text Society.)

DEATH.

HEAR ye of one thing,
That ye ought of think,
Ye that weareth that rich
shroud,
And sitteth on your bench,
They kneel me you before,
And with wine schenche ; ¹
From the dreary death
May no man at-blenche. ²

Ye that sit clad
With scarlet and with pall,
Well sooth tiding
I you will tell ;
The fiend thinketh, I wis,
The soul for to quell,
As we it find written
In the gospel.

But of one thing
We should take gome, ³

¹ Pour out.² Escape.³ Heed.

That we were poor
When we hither come ;
We it hear, I wis,
Full oft and ilome,⁴
The soul and the body
Are seldom at one.

When that child is born,
And on earth fall,
Ne would I give one penny
For his weeds all ;
But, since, many men
Gain bowers and hall,
Therefor the wretch soul
Shall into pain fall.

Think we, on the last day
That we shall hence fare,
Out of this world,
With pain and with care,
All as we hither came,
Naked and bare,
And of our sins
Given answe're.

⁴ Repeatedly.

Has man never so much,
All it will go,
His land and his wealth,
His house and his home ;
The sorry soul
Maketh her moan ;
I wis may escape
Of us never none.

When the latemost day
Death hath brought,
Taketh our speech,
Our sight and thought,
And in each limb
Death us hath through sought,
Then beeth our bliss
All turned to nought.

Might no tongue tell,
That ever was born,
The strong pain of hell,
(Though he had sworn,
Ere the soul and the body
In two were drawn,)
But Christ, that loosed His folk,
That there was for-loren.

Anon, so the soul
Beeth i-faren out,
He taketh the body,
And seweth in a clout,
That was so moody and so strong,
And so very proud,
And was wont to wear
Many a fair shroud.

Now lieth the clay clod,
All as the stone,
And his friends striveth
To gripen his iwon ;⁵
The sorry soul
Maketh her moan,
Of all her erst friends
Now haveth she none.

Then sayeth the soul,
With sorry cheer,
“ Away, thou wretch foul body,
Now thou liest on bier
I shall have for thee
Fiends to ivere ;⁶
Alas that thou ever
To man shaped were.

⁵ Property.

⁶ Company.

“Thou shalt never sit
On bolster, nor on bench,
Nor never in none hall,
Where the wine schenche;⁷
For thy foul sins,
And for thine uni-wrenche,⁸
I shall, thy wretch soul,
To horrible stench.

“Where be all thy friends,
That fair thee be-hight,
And fair thee greeted
By ways and by street?
Now they will, wretch,
All thee forlete,⁹
Nor would they none willingly
Now thee meet.

“Where be thy dishes,
With thy sweet sonde?¹
Where be thy cups,
That thee glide to hand?
Where is thy bread and thine ale?
Thy tun and thy stonde?²

⁷ Is poured.

⁸ Evil tricks.

⁹ Forsake.

¹ Meats.

² Tub.

Now thou shalt, in the pit,
Dwell with the wonde.³

“Of me thou havedst might
To do all thy will,
Ever thou went about
Us both for to spill;
Now thou shalt, wretch,
Lie full still,
And I shall thy guilts
Abye full ill.

“Why wouldst not with Christ
Make us isauhte?⁴
Masses let sing
Of that He thee betaught?
Ever thou wert about
To eke thy ayhte,⁵
Therefore we be, at last,
Both bi-pauhte.⁶

“Seldom will they for thee
Mass let sing,
Or in holy church
Give any offering;

³ Satan.

⁴ Reconciled.

⁵ Wealth.

⁶ Deceived.

Be thou in the pit
Worms ifere ;²
It beeth soon of thee
As though thou never were.

“ All that I hated,
That thought thee full good ;
What maked thee wicked,
That thou bi-stod ;³
Thou havedst thy will,
Thou were all wod ;⁴
And I am, wretch soul,
Full sorry-mood.

“ Now thou shalt by-leven,⁵
And I must fare nede,⁶
For all thy guilts
Receive I shall meed ;
That is, hunger and chill,
And fire-burning glede,⁷
And so me will Satan
Full horribly brede.⁸

“ I am sorry enow,
By day and by night ;

² Among.

³ Stood by.

⁴ Mad.

⁵ Stay behind.

⁶ Needs go on.

⁷ Coals.


⁸ Broil.

I shall to this stead,
Where never cometh light ;
There I shall meet
Many a foul wight ;
Nor shall I never see
Christ, that is so bright."

• • • • •

The King, that all this world made
Through His holy might,
Keep our soul
From that evil wight ;
And let us hate that woe,
And love that right,
And bring our soul
To heavenly light. Amen.

(Early English Text Society.)

ACH day me cometh tidings three,
Very sore be they ;
The one is, that I shall hence ;
The other, that I know not when ;
The third is my most care,
That I know not whither I shall fare.

(Early English Text Society.)

LONG LIFE.



MAN may long life ween,
But oft for him lieth the wrenche ¹
Fair weather turneth oft to rain,
And wonderfully maketh his blench. ²

- Therefore man, thou thee bithenche, ³
All shall fade thy green ;
Wellaway, nys king nor queen
That shall not drink of Death's drench ;
Man, ere thou fall off thy bench,
Thy sin thou aquench.

'Nis none so strong, nor stark, nor keen,
That may escape Death's wyther blench ; ⁴
Young and old, bright and sheen,
All he riveth on one strength ;
Fox ⁵ and ferlich ⁶ is his wrench, ⁷
Nor may no man thereto gainsay,
Wellaway ! by threat or bene, ⁸

¹ Snare.

² Turn.

³ Bethink.

⁴ Attack.

⁵ Sly.

⁶ Strange.

⁷ Trick.

⁸ Prayer.

Meed, craft, or leech's drink ;
Man, leave sin and lusts thine,
Well thou do, and well thou think.

Do by Solomon's rede,
Man, and then thou shalt well do ;
Do as He thee taught and said,
That thine ending thee bringeth to ;
Then shalt thou never mis-do,
But sore thou might thee adread.
Wellaway ! such weeneth to lead
Long life, and bliss underfo ;⁹
But Death lurketh in his shoe,
Him stilly to for-do.

Man, why wilt thou not thee beknow,
Man, why wilt thou not thee besee ;
Of foul filth thou art isown,
Worm's food thou shalt be ;
Here thou hast not bliss days three,
But thy life all thou ledest in woe ;
Wellaway ! Death thee shall down throw,
There thou weenest highest to steo ;
In death shall thy life end,
And in weeping all thy glee.

⁹ Receive.

¹ Ascend.

World and wealth thee deceiveth,
I wis they be thy foe ;
If the world with wealth thee sleeketh,
That is for to do thee woe ;
Therefore, let lust overgo,
If after it thee liketh ;
Wellaway ! sore he himself cheateth,
That, for one stound² or two,
Worketh him pain ever mo ;
Man, do thou nought so.

(Early English Text Society.)

² Hour.

SINNERS BEWARE, 1250.

* * * * *

BUT we ween to live,
And long to sin ;
And after, at the end,
All our sins to end,
To be-weep and bewail,
And so to heaven wend.

But be nought too thryst,¹
Nor thereto nought trust ;
Thereupon I you lere ;²
For there is none that wist,
But Himself Christ,
When his end-day were.

Soothly, when we be dead,
Every each shall have the meed
After his earning ;
But we us be-rede,
The ghost it shall ivrede,³
And fareth to pining.

¹ Bold.² Advise.³ Depart.

When body me bindeth,
One here me him be-windeth,
And bringeth him in earth ;
The worm him findeth,
To ashes he him grindeth,
Thereto we shall iwurthe.⁴

He lieth and rotteth low,
Nor haveth he that is his own
Of wealth nor of land ;
Nor haveth he mey ne mowe,⁵
That dare one throw
By him sit nor stand.

Soothly, naked and bare,
With woe and with care,
We come to this life ;
All so we shall fare,
And all our pride there
Lose and leave.

Hereof we ought thenche,⁶
And our sins quench
With prayers and with alms ;

⁴ Be done.

⁵ Kinsman or woman.

⁶ Think.

And can at-blensch ⁷
From Satan's wrench,⁸
And from his deceit.

* * * * *

(Early English Text Society.)

⁷ Escape.

⁸ Snares.



WHEN thine hue paleth,
And thy strength weakeneth,
And thy nose coldeth,
And thy tongue faltereth,
And thee leaveth thy breath,
And thy life thee leaveth ;
He taketh thee now, wretch,
On floor he thee stretcheth,
And layeth thee on bier,
And seweth thee up there,
And doeth thee in pit, worm's iver ;¹
Then beeth it soon of thee as though
thou never were.

(*Early English Text Society.*)

¹ Mate.

A HYMN TO SIMON DE MONTFORT,
SLAIN AT EVESHAM, 1265.



ALVE, Simon Montis fortis,
Totius flos militiæ ;
Duras pœnas passus mortis,
Protector gentis Angliæ.
Sunt de Sanctis inaudita,
Cunctis passis in hac vitâ,
Quenquam passum talia ;
Manus, pedes, amputari,
Caput, corpus, vulnerari,
Abscidi virilia.
Sis pro nobis intercessor
Apud Deum, qui defensor
In terris extiteras.

(*Unknown.*)

ON KING EDWARD THE FIRST, 1307.



ALL that be of heart true,
 A stound¹ hearken to my song,
 Of dule, that Death hath dight us new,
 That maketh me sick, and sorrow among;
 Of a knight that was so strong,
 Of whom God hath done His will;
 Methinketh that Death hath done us wrong,
 That he so soon shall lie still.

All England ought for to know
 Of whom that song is, that I sing,
 Of Edward King, that lieth so low,
 Zent² all this world his name can spring;
 Truest man of all thing,
 And in war 'ware and wise,
 For him we ought our hands wring,
 Of Christendom he bare the prize.

Before that our king was dead,
 He spake as man that was in care,
 "Clerks, knights, barons," he said,
 "I charge you by our sware,"³

¹ A while.

² Through.

³ Oath.

That ye to England be true,
I die, I ne may live no more,
Help my son, and crown him newe,
For he is next to been y-core.⁴

"I bequeath my heart aright,
That it be writ, at my devise,
Over the sea that Hue be dight,
With fourscore knights, all of prize,
In war that be 'ware and wise,
Against the heathen for to fight,
To win the cross that low lies,
Myself it would, if that I might."

King of France, thou havedst sin,
That thou the counsel wouldest fond ⁵
To let the will of Edward King
To wend to the Holy Land,
That our king had take on hand
All England to zeme ⁶ and wysse,⁷
To wend in to the Holy Land,
To win us heavenly bliss.

The messenger to the Pope came,
And said that our king was dead ;

⁴ Chosen.⁵ Contrive.⁶ Govern.⁷ Take care of.

His own hand the letter he nom,⁸
I wis his heart was full great ;
The Pope himself the letter read,
And spake a word of great honour,
“ Alas ! he said, is Edward dead ?
Of Christendom he bare the flower.”

The Pope to his chamber went,
For dole ne night he speak no more,
And after cardinals he sent,
That much couthen of Christe’s lore,
Bothe the less, and eke the more,
Bade them both read and sing ;
Great dule me might see there,
Many man his hands wring.

The Pope of Peter’s stood at his mass,
With full great solemnity,
There me can the soul bless ;
“ King Edward, honoured thou be ;
God love thy son come after thee,
Bring to end that thou hast begun,
The holy cross, y-made of tree,
So fain thou wouldst it have y-won.

“ Jerusalem, thou hast y-lore⁹
The flower of all chivalry,

⁸ Took.

⁹ Lost.

Now King Edward liveth no more ;
Alas ! that he yet should die ;
He would have reared up full high
Our banners, that be brought to ground ;
Well ! long we may clepe ¹ and cry,
Ere we a such king have found."

Now is Edward of Carnarvon
King of England, all aplyht ; ²
God let him ne'er be worse man
Than his father, nor less of might,
To hold his poor men to right,
And understand good counsel,
All England for to wisse and dight ;
Of good knights darh ³ him nought fail.

Though my tongue were made of steel,
And mine heart y-zote ⁴ of brass,
The goodness might I never tell
That with King Edward was ;
King, as thou art cleped, conqueror,
In each battle thou haddest prize ;
God bring thy soul to the honour,
That ever was, and ever is,

¹ Call.² Complete.³ There will ?⁴ Cast.

That lasteth aye withouten end.
Bid we God, and our Lady, to this bliss
Jesus us send. Amen.

(Percy Reliques.)

THE PEARL.



PEARL pleasant to prince's paye
 To cleanly close in gold so clear,
 Out of Orient, I hardly say,
 Ne proved I never her precious peer ;
 So round, so reken ² in each array,
 So small, so smooth her sides were,
 Wheresoever I judged gems gay,
 I set her sengely ³ in singular.
 Alas ! I lost her in an arbour,
 Through grass to ground it from me got,
 I pine for-dolked ⁴ of love danger
 Of that proud pearl withouten spot.
 Since, in that spot it from me sprang,
 Oft have I waited ; wishing that weal,
 That wont was, will devoyde ⁵ my wrong,
 And heaven my happe ⁶ and all my hele,⁷
 That does bot ⁸ through my heart throng,
 My breast in bale ⁹ bot bolne ¹ and bele ².
 Yet thought me never so sweet a song,

¹ Pleasure. ² Beautiful. ³ Ever. ⁴ Wounded.
⁵ Do away with. ⁶ Joy. ⁷ Health. ⁸ Only.
⁹ Sorrow. ¹ Swell. ² Boil.

As secret sorrow let to me steal ;
 Forsooth there fleeted to me fele,³
 To think her colour so clad in clod ;
 O mould ! thou mars a merry mele ;⁴
 My privy pearl withouten spot.
 That spot of spices must needs spread,
 There such riches to rot is run,
 Blooms, yellow, and blue, and red,
 There shines full bright against the sun ;
 Flower and fruit may not be-fede⁵
 Where it down drove in moulds dun ;
 For each grass must grow of grains dead,
 No wheat were else to wones⁶ won,
 Of good each good is aye begun.
 So seemly a seed must fail not,
 That springing spices up ne sponne⁷
 Of that precious pearl withouten spot.
 To that spot that I in speech expound
 I entered, in that arbour green,
 In August, in a hot season,
 When corn is carven with crooks keen.
 While there⁸ pearl it trendled⁹ down
 Shadowed these worts, full bright and sheen,¹

³ Many (thoughts).

⁴ Discourse.

⁵ Fade ?

⁶ Dwellings.

⁷ Grew.

⁸ There where.

⁹ Rolled.

¹ Beautiful.

Gilliflower, ginger, and gromyloun,
 And peonies powdered aye between ;
 If it was seemly but to see
 A fair reflowr² set from it afloat ;
 There wones³ that, worthily I wot and ween,
 My precious pearl withouten spot.
 Before that spot my hands I spenned⁴
 For care full cold that to me cast,
 A denely⁵ dole in my heart dinned,
 Though reason set myselfen sazt ;⁶
 I plained my pearl that there was spenned ;⁷
 With fearful doubts, that fast fought,
 Though kind of Christ me comfort kenned,⁸
 My wretched will in woe aye wrought.
 I fell upon that flowery flat,
 Such odour to my harns⁹ shot,
 I slode upon a sleeping-stroke,
 On that precious pearl withouten spot.

From spot my spirit there sprang in space,
 My body on bank there 'bode in sweven,
 My ghost is gone in God's grace
 In adventure there¹ marvels moven ;²

² Odour.³ Dwells.⁴ Wrung.⁵ Loud.⁶ At peace.⁷ Enticed away.⁸ Taught.⁹ Brain.¹ There where.² Move.

I ne wist in this world where that it was,
 But I knew me cast where cliffs cleven.
 Toward a forest I bare the face,
 Where rich rocks were to dyscreven ;³
 The light of them might no man beleven,
 The gleaming glory that off them glent,
 For were never webs, that wights weaven,
 Of half so dear adornment :
 Dubbed⁴ were all they down sides
 With crystal cliffs so clear of kind ;
 Holt-woods bright about them bides,
 Of boles as blue as ble⁵ of Ind ;
 As burnished silver the leaf on slides
 That thick can twirl on each tynde,⁶
 When gleam of glades against them glides,
 With shimmering sheen full schrylle⁷ they shined ;
 The gravel that on ground can grind
 Were precious pearls of orient,
 The sun beams but blo⁸ and blynde⁹
 In respect of that adornment.
 The adornment of those downs dear
 Garred my ghost all grief forget ;
 So fresh flavours of fruits were,
 As food it can me fair refresh ;

³ Descry. ⁴ Decked. ⁵ Colour. ⁶ Bough.

⁷ Clear. ⁸ Pale. ⁹ Dull.

Fowles there flew in fryth ¹ in fere,²
 Of flaming hues, both small and great ;
 Both guitar string and gyternere,³
 Their merry mirth must not retrete ;⁴
 For when those birds their wings beat,
 They sang with a sweet assent ;
 So gracious glee could no man get
 As here, and see their adornment.
 So all was dübbed ⁵ on dear asyse,⁶
 That fryth where fortune forth me feres,⁷
 The dearth ⁸ thereof for to devise
 Is no wight worthy that tongue bears ;
 I walk aye forth in wely ⁹ wise,
 No bank so big that did me deres.¹
 Further in the fryth the feier ² can rise,
 The plane, the plants, the spice, the pears ;
 And rows, and randes,³ and rich rivers,
 As *fil d'or* fine their banks burnt :
 I won to a water, by shore that sheers,
 Lord ! dear was its adornment :
 The adornment of those dearworth deeps
 Were banks bonny of beryl bright ;
 Flowing sweet the water can sweep,

¹ Wood.	² Company.	³ Harp.	⁴ Be named.
⁵ Decked.	⁶ Fashion.	⁷ Carries.	⁸ Dearnness.
⁹ Happy.	¹ Hurt.	² Fir ?	³ Paths.

With a rownande ⁴ rourde ⁵ raykande ⁶ aright ;
 In the founce ⁷ there stood stones steep,
 As glent through glass that glowed and glist ;
 As shining stars, when stout men sleep,
 Shine in welkin in winter night ;
 For each pebble, in pool there pight,
 Was emerald, sapphire, or gem gente,⁸
 That all the loze ⁹ gleamed of light,
 So dear was its adornment.

The adornment dear of down and dales,
 Of wood and water and wlonk ¹ plains,
 Built in me bliss, abated my bales,
 Foredid my distress, destroyed my pains ;
 Down after a stream that dryzly ² hales ³
 I bowed in bliss, brim-full my brains ;
 The further I followed those winding vales,
 The more strength of joy my heart strains ;
 As fortune fares wherever she fraynes,⁴
 Whether solace she send, or else sore,
 The wight, to whom his will she waynes,⁵
 Hights to have aye more and more.
 More of weal was in that wise,

⁴ Murmuring. ⁵ Sound. ⁶ Flowing. ⁷ Bottom.
⁸ Noble. ⁹ Deep. ¹ Beautiful. ² Strongly.
³ Flows. ⁴ Chooses. ⁵ Gives.

Than I could tell, though I time had,
 For earthly heart might not suffice
 To the tenth part of that gladness glad ;
 Therefore I thought that Paradise
 Was there, over against those banks broad ;
 I hoped the water were a device,
 Between mirths by meres made ;⁶
 Beyond the brook, by slope or slade,
 I hoped that moat merked⁷ were ;
 But the water was deep, I durst not wade,
 And ever I longed more and more.
 More and more, and yet well more
 Me list to see the brook beyond,
 For if it was fair where I can fare,⁸
 Full lovelier was the further land.
 About me can I stand and stare,
 To find a ford fast can I fonde,⁹
 But ways more I wis there were,
 The further I stalked by the strand ;
 And ever methought I should not wonde¹
 For woe, where weals so wyne² were.
 Then new note³ me came on hand,
 That moved my mind aye more and more ;
 More marvel can my dom⁴ adaunt,

⁶ Made as a boundary between joys ?⁷ Bounded.⁸ Go.⁹ Try.¹ Fear.² Joyful.³ New wonders came to my notice.⁴ Purpose.

I see, beyond that merry mere,
A crystal cliff full relucēt,
Many royal rays can from it rear ;
At the foot thereof there sat a faunt,⁵
A maiden of honour full debonnair ;
Glistening white was her bleaunt,⁶
(I knew her well, I had seen her ere,)
As glistening gold that man can schere,⁷
So shone that sheen along the shore :
The longer I looked to her there,
The longer I knew her, more and more,
The more I frayste⁸ her fair face ;
Her figure fine when I had fonte,⁹
Such gladding glory can to me glance,
As little before thereto was wont ;
To call her list can me enchace,
But abasement gave my heart a brunt ;
I see her in so strange a place,
Such a blow might make my heart blunt.
Then veered she up her fair front,
Her visage white as plain ivory,
That stung my heart full strange attaint,
And ever the longer the more and more.

⁵ Girl.⁶ Robe.⁷ Refine.⁸ Examined.⁹ Examined.

More than me list my dread arose,
 I stood full still and durst not call,
 With eyes open, and mouth full close,
 I stood as hende¹ as hawk in hall;
 I hope that ghostly was that purpose,
 I dread at last what should befall,
 Lest she me escaped, as I there chos,²
 Ere I at steven³ her might stalle.⁴

* * * * *

No gladder man hence on to Greece
 Than I, when she on brink were;
 She was to me nearer than aunt or niece,
 My joy for that was much the more;
 She proffered me speech, that special spice,
 Inclining low in woman-lore,⁵
 Cast off her crown of great treasure,
 And hailed me with a lote⁶ light;
 Well was me that ever I was born
 To sware⁷ that sweet in pearls pight.
 "Oh pearl," quoth I, "in pearls pight,
 Art thou my pearl that I have 'plained,
 Regretted by myself at night?
 Much longing have I for thee layned;⁸

¹ Gentle.² Sought.³ Command.⁴ Stay.⁵ Womanly-wise.⁶ Curtsey.⁷ Answer.⁸ Hidden.

Since into grass thou me aglyzte,⁹
Pensive, impaired, I am forepained ;
And thou in a life of liking lit,
In Paradise earth, of strife unstrained.
What weird has hither my jewel vayned,¹
And done me this dole and great danger ?
Since we in twain were towed and twained
I have been a joyless jeweller."
That jewel then, in gems gente,
Veered up her face with eyes grey,
Set on her crown of pearl orient,
And soberly after then can she say—
"Sir, ye have your tale mistente,
To say your pearl is all away,
That is in coffer so comely clente²
As in this garden, gracious, gaye,
Herein to live for ever and play ;
There sin nor sorrow come never here ;
There were a coffer for thee in fay,
If thou wert a gentle jeweller.
But, jeweller gentle, if thou shalt lose
Thy joy for a gem that to thee was lief,
Methinks thee put in a mad purpose,
And busyest thee about a reason brief ;
For that thou lost was but a rose

⁹ Slipped from.¹ Brought.² Shut.

That flowered, and failed, as kind it gave ;
Now, through kind of the kist that it can close,
To a pearl of price it is put in proof ;
And thou hast called the Word a thief,
That out of nought hast made thee clear ;
Thou blamest thy bote ³ for thy mischief,
Thou art no kind jeweller."

"I wis," quoth I, "my blissful best,
My great distress you all to-drawes,
To be excused I make request,
I trowed my pearl done out of days ;
Now have I found it, I shall me feast,
And dwell with it in fair wood shaws,
And love my Lord, and all his lawes,
That has me brought this bliss near ;
Now, were I with you beyond these waves,
I were a joyful jeweller."

"Jeweller," said that gem clean,
"Why ! jest ye man ? so mad ye be ;
Three words hast thou spoken at ene,⁴
Unadvised, forsooth, were all three ;
Thou ne wottest in world what one does mean,
Thy word before thy wit can flee ;
Thou says, thou trows me in this dean
Because thou may with eyes me see ;

³ Saviour.

⁴ Once.

Another, thou says in this country
Thyself shall dwell with me right here ;
The third, to pass this water free,
That may no joyful jeweller.

* * * * *

Deem now thyself, if thou can, daily
As man to good words should heve ;⁵
Thou sayest thou shalt dwell in this bailey,
Methink thee behoved first ask leave,
And yet of grant thou mightest fail ;
Thou wilt over this water to come,
Here must thou cever⁶ to other counsel ;
Thy corse in clod must colder keve,⁷
For it was forgate ;⁸ at Paradise grove
Our forefather it can misuse ;
Through dreary Death each man must drive,
Ere over this dam, him the Lord call.”
“Doomest thou me,” quoth I, “my sweet,
To dole again, then when I dwine ?
Now have I found what I had lost,
Shall I este⁹ forego it ere ever I fyne ?¹
Why shall I it both miss and meet ?
My precious pearl does me great pine ;
What serves treasure, but gar men greet,

⁵ Rise. ⁶ Reach. ⁷ Go. ⁸ Forfeited.

⁹ Again. ¹ Die.

When he shall eft with tenes² tyne ?
Now reck I never for to decline,
Nor how far off fold that men me fleme,³
When I am partless of pearls mine.
But during dole what may men deem ? ”
“ Thou deemest nought but dole distress ; ”
Then said that wight, “ Why dost thou so ?
For din of dole, of losses less
Oft many men forgoes the mo :
Thee ought better thyself bless,
And love aye God, in weal and woe,
For anger gains thee not a cress ;
Who needs shall thole, be not so thro ;⁴
For though thou dance as any doe,
Brandish and bray thy brathes⁵ breme,
When thou no further may, to nor fro,
Thou must abide what He shall doom.
Call on the Lord, ever him adyte,
Off the way a foot He will not writhe ;
Thy amends ’mounts not a mite,
Though thou for sorrow be never blithe ;
Stint of thy strut, and finish to flyte,
And seek His bliss, full swift and swithe ;⁶
Thy prayer may on His pity bite

² Sorrows. ³ Banish. ⁴ Angry. ⁵ Fierce anger.

⁶ Earnestly.

That mercy shall her crafts kythe,⁷
 His comfort may thy languor lythe,⁸
 And thy losses off lightly leme ;⁹
 For, mar or madde,¹ mourning and mythe,²
 All lies in Him to dight and doom."

Then called I to that damsel :
 " Ne worthe nor wrath thee unto my Lord,
 If hastily, rage spornande³ in spelle,⁴
 My heart was all with mysse⁵ remord⁶
 As welling water goes out of well ;
 I do me aye in his misericorde ;
 Rebuke me never with words fell,
 That I forsake my dear adored ;
 But lythes⁷ me kindly your comfort,
 Piteously thinking upon this,
 Of care and me ye made accord,
 That erst was ground of all my bliss ;
 My bliss, my bale, ye have been both,
 But much the bigger yet was my moan ;
 For thou wast wroken⁸ from each wothe,⁹
 I wist never where my pearl was gone ;
 Now I it see, now lethes¹ my lothe,²

⁷ Show.	⁸ Assuage.	⁹ Glide.	¹ Make mad.
² Trouble.	³ Rushing.	⁴ Speech.	⁵ Loss.
⁶ Grieved.	⁷ Grant.	⁸ Banished.	⁹ Harm.
	¹ Calms.	² Sorrow.	

And when we parted we were at one,
 God forbid we be now wrath,
 We meet so seldom by stock or stone.
 Though courteously ye carp can,
 I am but moe and mareres mysse,³
 But Christ's mercy, and Mary, and John,
 These are the grounds of all my bliss.
 In bliss I see thee blithely blent,
 And I a man all mournful mate ;⁴
 Ye take thereon full little tent,
 Though I hent⁵ oft harm's hate.
 But now I am here in your presence,
 I would beseech, without debate,
 Ye would me say, in sober assent,
 What life ye lead early and late ?
 For I am full fain that your estate
 Is worthen⁶ to worship and weal iwysse,⁷
 Of all my joy the high gate,
 It is in ground of all my bliss."
 "Now bliss, burne,⁸ may thee betide,"
 Then said that lovesome of lyth⁹ and lere,
 "And welcome here to walk and bide,
 For now thy speech is to me dear ;

³ Dust and Rubbish.⁴ Dejected.⁵ Receive.⁶ Changed.⁷ Truly.⁸ Man.⁹ Limb and feature.

Masterful mood, and high pride,
I hight thee, are utterly hated here ;
My Lord ne loves not for to chide,
For meek are all that dwell Him near ;
And when in His place thou shalt appear,
Be deep devote in holy meekness ;
My Lord the Lamb loves aye such cheer,
That is the ground of all my bliss.
A blissful life, thou says, I lead,
Thou wouldest know thereof the stage ;
Thou wott'st well, when thy pearl can schede,¹
I was full young and tender of age ;
But my Lord the Lamb, through His Godhead,
He took myself to his marriage,
Crowned me queen in bliss to bide,
In length of days that ever shall wage,
And seized in all His heritage ;
His lief is, I am wholly His,
His praise, his prize, and his parage,²
Is root and ground of all my bliss."

* * * * *

(*Early English Text Society.*)

¹ Depart.

² Kindred.

SIR GAWAINE'S LAST FIGHT.



THEN Sir Gawaine grat¹ with his gray eyen,
For grief of his good men that he guide
should ;

He wist that they wounded were, and weary for-
foughten ;

And, what for wonder and woe, all his wit failed.
And then sighing he said, with streaming tears,—
“ We are with Saracens beset upon many sides.

I sigh not for myself, so help our Lord,
But for us surprised, my sorrow is the more.
Be ye doughty to-day, yon dukes shall be yours,
For dear Lord this day dread no weapon.
We shall end this day as excellent knights,
Ayre² to endless joy with angels unwemmyde.³

Though we have unwittingly wasted ourselves,
We shall work all well in the worship of Christ.
We shall for yon Saracens, I pledge you my troth,
Sup with our Saviour solemnly in heaven,
In presence of that precious prince of all other,

¹ Wept.

² To go.

³ Unspotted.

With prophets, and patriarchs, and apostles full
noble,

Before his freliche ⁴ face that formed us all.

Yonder to yon Yaldsones he that yields him ever,
Whiles he is quick, and in querte ⁵ unquelled with
hands,

Be he never more saved nor succoured with Christ,
But Satanas his soul may sink into hell."

(Early English Text Society.)

⁴ Joyful

⁵ Life.

KING ARTHUR'S GRIEF FOR SIR
GAWAINE.



HEN gazes the good king, and glapyns¹
in heart,

Groans full grisly with greeting tears,
Kneels down to the corse and caught it in arms,
Hastes up his vizor and kisses him soon,
Looks on his eyelids, that locked were fair,
His lips like to the lead, and his lire² falowede.³
Then the crowned king cries full loud,
"Dear cousin of kind, in care am I left ;
For now my worship is went, and my war ended ;
Here is the hope of my health, my happing of
arms,

My heart and my hardiness wholly on him lying ;
My counsel, my comfort, that kepted my heart,
Of all knights the king that under Christ livēd.
Thou was worthy to be king, though I the crown
bare.

My weal and my worship of all this world rich

¹ Fears.

² Face.

³ Withered.

Was won through Sir Gawaine, and through his wit
only.

Alas," said Sir Arthur, "now ekes my sorrow ;
I am utterly undone in mine own lands.


Ah, duteous daring deed, thou duellis⁴ too long,
Why draws thou so on dreghe,⁵ thou drowns my
heart."

(Early English Text Society.)

⁴ Stayedst ?

⁵ Delay.

KING ARTHUR'S LAMENT FOR HIS
KNIGHTS.


“ING comely with crown, in care am I left ;
All my lordship low in land is laid under,
That me has given guerdons by grace
of themselves,

Maintained my manhood by might of their hands,
Made me manly on mould, and master in earth.
In a teenful time this trouble was reared,
That for a traitor has tint all my true lords ;
Here rests the rich blood of the round table,
Rebuked with a ribald, and ruth is the more ;
I may helpless one heth¹ house be mine own ;
All as a woeful widow that wants her burying,
I may weary and weep, and wring my hands,
For my wit and my worship away is for ever ;
Of all lordship I take leave to mine end ;
Here is the Briton's blood brought out of life,
And now in this *journeé*² all my joy ends.”

(*Early English Text Society.*)

¹ Wretched.

² Day.

 INTER wakeneth all my care,
Now these leaves waxeth bare.
Oft I sigh, and mourn sare,
When it cometh in my thought
Of this world's joy, how it goeth all to nought.

Now it is, and now it n'is,
All so as it ne'er were, I wis;
That many men saith, sooth it is,
All goeth but God's will :
All we shall die, though us like ill.

All that grain me groweth green,
Now, it fadeth all by-dene.¹
Jesu's help, that it be seen,
And shield us from hell,
For I ne wot whither I shall, ne how long here
dwell.

(*Unknown.*)

¹ Presently.

A LYKEWAKE DIRGE.



THIS ae night, this ae night,
Everie night and alle,
Fire, and sleete, and candle-lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule.

When thou from hence away art past,
Everie night and alle,
To Whinny muir thou comest at last,
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gavest hosen and shoon,
Everie night and alle,
Sit thee down and put them on,
And Christe receive thy saule.

If hosen and shoon thou gavest nane,
Everie night and alle,
The whinnes shall prick thee to the bare bane,
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Whinny muir when thou mayst pass,
Everie night and alle,
To Brigg o' Dread thou comest at last,
And Christe receive thy saule.

• • • • •
 From Brigg o' Dread when thou mayst pass,
 Everie night and alle,
 To Purgatory Fire thou comest at last,
 And Christe receive thy saule.


If ever thou gavest meate or drinke,
 Everie nighte and alle,
 The fire shall never make thee shrinke,
 And Christe receive thy saule.

If meate or drinke thou gavest nane,
 Everie night and alle,
 The fire will burn thee to the bare bane,
 And Christe receive thy saule.

This ae night, this ae night,
 Everie night and alle,
 Fire, and sleete, and candle-lighte,
 And Christe receive thy saule.

(Ballad Book.)

SIR PATRICK SPENS.

HE king sits in Dunfermline town,
Drinking the blood-red wine ;
“ O where will I get gude sailor,
To sail this ship of mine ? ”

Up and spake an eldern knight,
Sat at the king's right knee,
“ Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor
That sails upon the sea. ”

The king has written a broad letter,
And signed it wi' his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the sand.

* * * * *

The first line that Sir Patrick read,
A loud laugh laughed he,
The next line that Sir Patrick read,
The tear blinded his ee.

“ O wha is this has done this deed,
This ill deed done to me ? ”

To send me out this time o' the year,
To sail upon the sea ?

* * * * *

" Make haste, make haste, my merry men all,
Our good ship sails the morn."

" O say na sae, my master dear,
For I fear a deadly storm ;

" Late, late yestreen, I saw the new moon,
Wi' the auld moon in her arm,
And I fear, I fear, my dear master,
That we will come to harm."

They had not sail'd a league, a league,
A league, but barely three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind blew loud,
And gurly grew the sea.

* * * * *

O lang, lang may the ladies sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the land ;

And lang, lang may the maidens sit,
With their goud kaims in their hair,
A' waiting for their ain dear loves,
For them they'll see nae mair.

Half owre, half owre to Aberdour,
'Tis fifty fathom deep,
And there lies good Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

(Percy Reliques.)

CHEVY CHASE (1450 ?)



THE Percy out of Northumberland,
And a vow to God made he,
That he would hunt in the mountains
Of Cheviot, within days three,
In the maugre of doughty Douglas,
And all that ever with him be.

The fattest harts in all Cheviot
He said he would kill, and carry them away ;
“ By my faith,” said the doughty Douglas again,
“ I will let that hunting if that I may.”

Then the Percy out of Bamborough came,
With him a mighty meny,
With fifteen hundred archers bold,
They were chosen out of shires three.

This began on a Monday at morn,
In Cheviot the hills so high ;
The child may rue, that is unborn,
The hunting of that day.

The drivers through the woods went,
For to raise the deer ;
Bowmen bickered upon the bent,
With their broad arrows clear ;

Then the wild through the woods went
On every side sheer ;
Greyhounds through the groves glent
For to kill their deer ;

They began in Cheviot the hills abune,
Early on a Monanday ;
By that it drew to the hour of noon,
A hundred fat harts dead there lay.

They blew a mort upon the bent,
They assembled on sides sheer,
To the quarry then the Percy went
To see the brittling of the deer.

He said, " It was the Douglas' promise
This day to meet me here,
But I wist he would fail verament ;"
A great oath the Percy sware.

At the last a squire of Northumberland
Looked at his hand full nigh,
He was 'ware of the doughty Douglas coming,
With him a mighty meny.

Both with spear, bill, and brand,
It was a mighty sight to see,
Hardier men both of heart nor of hand
Were not in Christiantè ;

They were twenty hundred spearmen good,
Withouten any fail ;
They were borne along by the water of Tweed,
I' the bounds of Tividale.

“ Leave off the brittling of the deer,” he said,
“ And to your bows look ye take good heed,
For never, since ye were on your mothers born,
Had ye never so mickle need.”

The doughty Douglas on a steed
He rode out his men beforne,
His armour glittered as did a glede,¹
A bolder barne ² was never born.

“ Tell me what men ye are,” he says,
“ Or whose men that ye be ;
Who gave you leave to hunt in this
Chase in the spite of me ?”

The first man that ever him an answer made,
It was the good lord Percy,

¹ Hot coal.

² Man.

"We will not tell thee what men we are," he
says,

"Nor whose men that we be,
But we will hunt here in this Chase,
In the spite of thine and thee ;

"The fattest harts in all Cheviot
We have killed, and cast to carry them away."
"By my troth," said the doughty Douglas again,
"Therefore the one of us shall die this day."

Then said the doughty Douglas
Unto the lord Percy,
"To kill all these guiltless men,
Alas ! it were great pity ;

"But, Percy, thou art a lord of land,
I am an earl called in my country,
Let all our men upon a party³ stand,
And do the battle off thee and off me."

"Now Christ's curse on his crown," said the lord
Percy,

"Whosoever thereto says nay ;
By my troth, doughty Douglas," he says again,
"Thou shalt never see that day,

³ Apart.

Neither in England, Scotland, nor France ;
Nor no man of a woman born,
But, an fortune be my chance,
I dare meet him one for one."

Then bespake a squire of Northumberland,
Ric Witharington was his name,
"It shall never be told in South England," he says,
"To King Harry the fourth, for shame ;

"I wot you be great lords two,
I am a poor squire of land ;
I will never see my captain fight on a field,
And stand myself and look on,
But, while I may my weapon wield,
I will not fail, both heart and hand."

* * * * *

The English men had their bows bent,
Their hearts were good enow ;
The first of arrows that they shot off,
Seven score spearmen they slew.

Yet bides the earl Douglas upon the bent,
A captain good enough,
And that was seen, verament,
For he wrought them both woe and wouche.⁴

⁴ Evil.

The Douglas parted his host in three,
Like a chief chieftain of pride,
With sure spears of mighty tree
They came in on every side,
Through our English archery
Gave many a wound full wide,
Many a doughty they garred to die,
Which gained them no pride.
The English men let their bows be,
And pulled out brands that were bright,
It was a heavy sight to see
Bright swords on basnets light ;
Through rich mail, and maniplie,
Many sterne the stroke down straight,
Many a freyke,^s that was full free,
There under foot did light.
At last the Percy and the Douglas met,
Like to captains of might and main,
They swapt together till they both sweat,
With swords that were of fine Milan.
These worthy freckys, for to fight,
Thereto they were full fain,
Till the blood out of their basnets sprent,
As ever did hail or rain.

^s Man.

“ Hold thee, Percy,” said the Douglas,

“ And in faith, I shall thee bring
Where thou shalt have an earl’s wages,
Of Jamie, our Scottish King ;

“ Thou shalt have thy ransom free,
I hight thee, hear this thing
For the manfullest man yet art thou
That ever I conquered in field fighting.”

“ Nay,” then said the lord Percy,
“ I told it thee beforne,
That I would never yielded be
To no man of a woman born.”

With that there came an arrow hastily
Forth of a mighty one,
It hath stricken the earl Douglas
In at the breast bone ;

Through liver and lungs both
The sharp arrow is gone,
That never after, in his life days,
He spake more words, but one,
That was, “ Fight ye, my merry men, whiles ye
may,
For my life days be done.”

The Percy leaned on his brand,
And saw the Douglas die,
He took the dead man by the hand,
And said, "Woe is me for thee ;
"To have saved thy life I would have parted wit
My lands for years three,
For a better man of heart, nor of hand,
Was not in all the north countree."
All that saw a Scottish knight,
Was called Sir Hugh Montgomery ;
He saw the Douglas to the death was dight ;
He spende⁶ a spear, a trusty tree ;
He rode upon a courser
Through a hundred archery ;
He never stinted, nor never blane,⁷
Till he came to the good lord Percy ;
He set upon the lord Percy
A dint that was full sore ;
With a sure spear, of a mighty tree,
Clean through the body he the Percy bore,
At the other side that a man might see
A large cloth yard and mair :
Two better captains were not in Christianté,
Than that day slain were there.

⁶ Grasped.⁷ Stopped.

An archer of Northumberland

Saw slain was the lord Percy,
He bear a bent bow in his hand,
Was made of trusty tree ;

An arrow, that a cloth-yard was long,
To the hard head haled he ;
A dint, that was both sad and sore,
He set on Sir Hugh Montgomery ;

The dint it was both sad and sore,
That he on the Montgomery set,
The swan feathers, that his arrow bare,
With his heart blood they were wet.

There was never a freyke one foot would flee,
But still in stour did stand,
Hewing on each other, while they might dree,
With many a baleful brand.

This battle begun in Cheviot
An hour before the noon,
And, when evensong bell was rung,
The battle was not half done.

They took on on either hand
By the light of the moon,
Many had no strength for to stand,
In Cheviot the hills abune.

Of fifteen hundred archers of England
Went away but fifty and three ;
Of twenty hundred spearmen of Scotland,
But even five and fifty ;

But all were slain Cheviot within,
They had no strength to stand on high ;
Thé child may rue that is unborn,
It was the more pity.

* * * * *

So on the morrow they made them biers
Of birch and hazel so grey ;
Many widows, with weeping tears,
Came to fetch their mates away.

Tivdale may carp of care,
Northumberland may make great moan,
For two such captains, as slain were there,
On the march parts shall never be none.

* * * * *

There was never a time on the march parts,
Sin' the Percy and the Douglas met,
But it was marvel, an' the red blood ran not
As the rain does in the street.

Jesu Christ our balys^s bete,
And to the bliss us bring ;
This was the hunting of the Cheviot,
God send us all good ending.
(*Percy Reliques.*)

^s Better our ills.

THE TWA CORBIES.



AS I was walking all alane,
I heard twa corbies making a mane;
The tane unto the tither did say,
“Whar sall we gang and dine the day?”
“In behint yon auld fail dyke,
I wot there lies a new slain knight;
And naebody kens that he lies there,
But his hawk, his hound, and his lady fair.
“His hound is to the hunting gane,
His hawk to fetch the wild fowl hame,
His lady’s ta’en anither mate,
Sae we may mak’ our dinner sweet.
“Ye’ll sit on his white hausebane,
And I’ll pike out his bonny blue e’en,
Wi’ ae lock o’ his gowden hair,
We’ll theek our nest when it grows bare.
“Mony’s the one for him makes mane,
But nane sall ken whar he is gone;
O’er his white banes, when they are bare,
The wind sall blaw for evermair.”

(Ballad Book.)

THE THREE SKULLS, 1480?



SINFUL man, into this mortal see,
Which is the vale of mourning and of
care,

With ghastly sight behold our heads three,
Our hollowed eyen, our peeled powis¹ bare ;
As ye are now, into this world we were,
As fresh, as fair, as lusty to behold ;
When thou looks on this sooth exemplar,
Of thyself, man, thou may be right unbold.

O wanton youth, as fresh as lusty May,
Fairest of flowers renewed white and red,
Behold our heads ; O lusty gallants gay,
Full earthly thus shall lie thy lusty head,
Hollow, and lean and wither'd as the weed ;
Thy crumpled hair, and eke thy crystal eyen,
Full carefully conclude shall duleful deid ;²
Thy example here by us it may be seen.

O ladies, clad in clothes coruscant,
Polish'd with pearl, and many a precious stone ;
With paps white, and halses³ elegant,

¹ Skulls.² Death.³ Necks.

Circled with gold, and sapphires many a one,
Your fingers small, white as whale's bone,
Arrayed with rings, and many rubies red ;
As we lie thus, so shall ye lie each one,
With peeled powis, and hollowed thus your head.

This question who can absolve, let see ;
What phisnamour, or perfect palmister ;
Who was fairest or foulest of us three ?
Or which of us of kin was gentiller ?
Or most excellent in science, or in lore,
In art, music, or in astronomy ?
Here should be your study and repair,
And think, as thus, all your heads must be.

(Patrick Fohnstoun.)

ELEGY ON HENRY, FOURTH EARL OF
NORTHUMBERLAND, 1489.



WAIL, I weep, I sob, I sigh full sore
The deadly fate, the doleful destiny
Of him that is gone, alas ! without re-
store,
Of the blood royal descending nobly ;
Whose lordship doubtless was slain lamentably
Through treason, against him compassed and
wrought,
True to his prince in word, and deed, and thought.

* * * * *

O peerless Prince of heaven empyreal,
That with one word formed all things of nought ;
Heaven, hell, and earth obey unto thy call ;
Which to thy resemblance wondrously hath wrought
All mankind, whom thou full dear hast bought ;
With thy blood precious our penance thou did pay,
And us redeemed from the fiend's prey ;

To thee pray we, as prince incomparable,
As thou art of mercy and pity the well,

Thou bring unto thy joy interminable
The soule of this lord from all danger of hell,
In endless bliss with thee to bide, and dwell
In thy palace above the orient,
Where thou art Lord and God omnipotent.

O queen of mercy, O lady full of grace,
Maiden most pure, and God's mother dear,
To sorrowful hearts chief comfort and solace,
Of all women O flower withouten peer,
Pray to thy Son, above the stars clear,
He to vouchsafe by thy mediation
To pardon thy servant, and bring to salvation ;

In joy triumphant the heavenly hierarchy,
With all the holy sort of that glorious place,
His soul mote receive into their company
Through bounty of Him that formed all solace,
Well of pity, of mercy, and of grace,
The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,
In Trinitate one God of mights most.

(*Skelton.*)

ON MAN'S MORTALITY. *Circa, 1500.*

EMENTO, Homo, quod cinis es.

Think, Man, thou are but earth
and ash.

Long here to dwell nothing thou press,
For, as thou come, so shalt thou pass,
Like as a shadow in a glass ;
Soon glides all thy time that here is ;
Think, though thy body were of brass,
Quod tu in cinerem reverteris.

* * * * *

Though now thou be most of cheer,
Fairest and pleasantest of port,
Yet may thou be, within one year,
An ugsome, ugly, foul tramort : ¹
And, since thou knows thy time is short,
And in all hours thy life in weir is,
Think, Man, among all other sport,
Quod tu in cinerem reverteris.

Thy lusty beauty, and thy youth
Shall fade, as does the summer flowers
Syne shall thee swallow, with his mouth,

¹ Corpse.

The dragon Death, that all devours ;
No castle shall thee keep, nor towers,
But he shall seek thee with thy feres ;²
Therefore remember, at all hours,
Quod tu in cinerem reverteris.

Though all this world thou did possaid,³
Nought after death thou shalt possess,
Nor with thee take, but thy good deed,
When thou does from this world thee dress ;
So speed thee, Man, and thee confess,
With humble heart, and sober tears,
And sadly in thy heart impress,
Quod tu in cinerem reverteris.

Though thou be tackled never so sure,
Thou shalt in Death's port arrive,
Where nought for tempest may endure,
But fiercely all to splinters drive ;
Thy Ransomer with wounds five,
Mak thy plight-anchor, and thy stars,
To hold thy soul with Him alive,
Cum tu in cinerem reverteris.

(*William Dunbar.*)

² Mates.

³ Possess.

1507.



THAT in health was and gladness,
Am troubled now with great sick-
ness,

And feebled with infirmity ;
Timor mortis conturbat me.

Our pleasure here is all vainglory,
This false world is but transitory,
The flesh is brittle, the Fiend is sly,
Timor mortis conturbat me.

The state of man does change and vary,
Now sound, now sick, now blithe, now sorry,
Now dancing merry, now like to die ;
Timor mortis conturbat me.

No state in earth here stands sicker ;¹
As with the wind waves the wicker,
So waves this world's vanity ;
Timor mortis conturbat me.

¹ Sure.

ON SIR THOMAS WYATT.



WYATT resteth here, that quick could never
rest ;

Whose heavenly gifts increased by
disdain,
And virtue sank the deeper in his breast ;
Such profit he by envy could obtain.

A head, where wisdom mysteries did frame,
Whose hammers beat still in that lively brain,
As on a stythe, where that some work of fame
Was daily wrought, to turn to Britain's gain.

A visage stern, and mild, where both did grow,
Vice to contemn, in virtue to rejoice ;
Amid great storms, whom grace assured so
To live upright, and smile at fortune's choice.

A hand, that taught what might be said in
rhyme,
That reft Chaucer the glory of his wit ;
A mark, the which, unperfected for time,
Some may approach, but never none shall hit.

A tongue, that served in foreign realms his king,
Whose courteous talk to virtue did inflame
Each noble heart, a worthy guide to bring
Our English youth by travail unto fame.

An eye, whose judgement none affect could blind
Friends to allure, and foes to reconcile ;
Whose piercing look did represent a mind
With virtue fraught, reposed void of guile.

A heart, where dread was never so imprest,
To hide the thought that might the truth advance ;
In neither fortune loft nor yet repest,
To swell in wealth, or yield unto mischance.

A valiant corpse, where force and beauty met,
Happy, alas ! too happy, but for foes,
Lived, and ran the race that nature set ;
Of manhood's shape, where she the mould did lose..

But to the heavens that simple soul is fled,
Which left, with such as covet Christ to know ;
Witness of faith, that never shall be dead ;
Lent for our health, but not received so.

Thus, for our guilt, this jewel have we lost,
The earth his bones, the heavens possess his
ghost.

(*Surrey.*)

ON SIR THOMAS WYATT.



O! dead, he lives, that whilome lived here,
Among the dead, that quick goes on the
ground ;

Though he be dead, yet quick he doth appear
By lively name, that death cannot confound.
His life for aye of fame the trump shall sound.
Though he be dead, yet lives he here alive,
Thus can no death of Wyatt life deprive.

(*Unknown.*)

ELEGIAC POEMS.

ELIZABETHAN.



LIFE AND DEATH.

THE longer life, the more offence;
The more offence, the greater pain ;
The greater pain, the less defence ;
The less defence, the lesser gain ;
The loss of gain long ill doth try,
Wherefore, come Death, and let me die.

The shorter life, less count I find ;
The less account, the sooner made ;
The account soon made, the merrier mind ;
The merrier mind doth thought evade ;
Short life in truth this thing doth try,
Wherefore, come Death, and let me die.

Come, gentle Death, the ebb of care ;
The ebb of care, the flood of life ;
The flood of life, the joyful fare ;
The joyful fare, the end of strife ;
The end of strife, that thing wish I,
Wherefore, come Death, and let me die.

. (*Unknown.*)

THE AGED LOVER.



LOATHE that I did love,
In youth that I thought sweet ;
As time requires, for my behove,
Methinks they are not meet.

My lusts they do me leave,
My fancies all are fled,
And track of time begins to weave
Grey hairs upon my head.

For Age with stealing steps
Hath clawed me with his crutch,
And lusty life away she leaps,
As there had been none such.

My Muse doth not delight
Me, as she did before ;
My hand and pen are not in plight,
As they have been of yore.

For reason me denies
This youthly idle rhyme,
And, day by day, to me she cries,
“ Leave off these toys in time.”

The wrinkles in my brow,
The furrows in my face
Say limping Age will lodge him now
Where Youth must give him place.

The harbinger of Death,
To me I see him ride,
The cough, the cold, the gasping breath,
Doth bid me to provide

A pickaxe, and a spade,
And eke a shrouding sheet,
A house of clay for to be made,
For such a guest most meet.

Methinks I hear the clerk,
That knolls the careful knell,
And bids me leave my woeful work
Ere nature me compel.

My keepers knit the knot
My youth did laugh to scorn,
Of me that clean shall be forgot,
As I had not been born.

Thus must I Youth give up,
Whose badge I long did wear ;
To them I yield the wanton cup
That better may it bear.

Lo, here the bared skull,
By whose bald sign I know
That stooping Age away shall pull
Which youthful years did sow.

For Beauty, with her band,
These crooked cares hath wrought,
And shipped me into the land
From whence I first was brought.

And ye, that bide behind,
Have ye none other trust;
As ye of clay were cast by kind,
So shall ye waste to dust.

(*Vaux.*)

ELEGY.

* * * * *



U P, then, Melpomene, the mournfullest
Muse of nine,

Such cause of mourning never hadst
afore ;

Up, grisly ghosts, and up my rueful rhyme,
Matter of mirth now shalt thou have no more ;
For dead she is that mirth thee made of yore.
Dido, my dear, alas ! is dead,
Dead, and lyeth wrapt in lead.

O heavie hearse !

Let streaming tears be poured out in store ;

O careful verse !

Shepherds, that by your flocks of Kentish downs
abide,

Wail ye this woeful waste of Nature's work,
Wail we the wight whose presence was our pride,
Wail we the wight whose absence is our cark ;
The sun of all the world is dim and dark,
The earth now lacks her wonted light,
And all we dwell in deadly night.

O heavy hearse !

Break we our pipes, that shrilled as loud as lark ;

O careful verse !

* * * * *

Whence is it, that the flow'ret of the field doth
fade,

And lyeth buried long in winter's bale,

Yet soon as spring his mantle hath displayed,

It flowereth fresh, as it should never fail,

But thing on earth that is of most avail,

As Virtue's branch, and Beauty's bud,

Reliven not for any good ?

O heavy hearse !

The branch once dead, the bud eke needs must
quail ;

O careful verse !

* * * * *

Ay me ! that dreary Death should strike so mortal
stroke,

That can undo Dame Nature's kindly course ;

The faded locks fall from the lofty oak,

The floods do gasp, for dried is their source,

And floods of tears flow in their stead perforce ;

The mantled meadows mourn,

Their sundry colours turn ;

O heavy hearse !
The heavens do melt in tears without remorse ;
O careful verse !

• • • • •

O trustless state of earthly things, and slipper hope
Of mortal men, that swink and sweat for nought,
And, shooting wide, do miss the marked scope ;
Now have I learn'd (a lesson dearly bought)
That n'is on earth assurance to be sought ;
For what might be in earthly mould,
That did her buried body hold ;

O heavy hearse !
Yet saw I on the bier where it was brought ;
O careful verse !

But maugre Death, and dreaded Sister's deadly
spite,
And gates of hell, and fiery Furies force,
She hath the bonds broke of eternal night,
Her soul unbodied of the burdenous corpse ;
Why then weeps Lobin so, without remorse ?
O Lob, thy loss no longer lament,
Dido n'is dead, but into heaven pent ;

O happy hearse !
Cease now, my Muse, now cease thy sorrows' source,
O joyful verse !

Why wail we then, why weary we the gods with
 plaints,

As if some evil were to her betight ?

She reigns a goddess now among the saints,
That whilome was the saint of shepherd's light,
And is installed now in heaven's height ;

I see thee, blessed soul, I see
Walk in Elysian fields so free.

 O happy hearse !

Might I once come to thee, (O that I might !)

 O joyful verse !

Unwise, and wretched men to meet what's good, or
 ill ;

We deem of Death as doom of ill desert,
But knew we, fools, what it us brings until,
Die would we daily, once it to expert ;
No danger there the shepherd can astert ;
Fair fields and pleasant leas there bene,
The fields aye fresh, the grass aye green,

 O happy hearse !

Make haste, ye shepherds, thither to revert ;

 O joyful verse !

Dido is gone afore ; whose turn shall be the next ?

There lives she with the blessed gods in bliss,
There drinks she nectar, with ambrosia mixt,

And joys enjoys that mortal men do miss ;
The honour now of highest gods she is,
That whilome was poor shepherd's pride,
While here on earth she did abide.

O happy hearse !

Cease now, my song, my woe now wasted is ;

O joyful verse !

(*Spenser.*)

DECEMBER.

* * * * *



Now my year draws to his latter term,
My spring is spent, my summer burnt up
quite,

My harvest hastes to stir up winter stern,
And bid him claim with rigorous rage his right ;
So now he storms with many a sturdy stour,
So now his blustering blast each coast doth scour.

The careful cold hath nipt my rugged rind,
And, in my face, deep furrows eld hath pight ;
My head besprent with hoary frost I find,
And by mine eye the crow his claw doth write ;
Delight is laid abed, and pleasure past ;
No sun now shines, clouds have all overcast.

Now leave, ye shepherd's boys, your merry glee,
My Muse is hoarse, and weary of this stound,
Here will I hang my pipe upon this tree,
Was never pipe of reed did better sound ;
Winter is come, that blows the bitter blast,
And, after winter, dreary Death does haste.

Gather ye together my little flock,
My little flock that was to me so lief,
Let me, ah ! let me, in your folds ye lock,
Ere the breme winter breed you greater grief;
Winter is come, that blows the baleful breath
And, after winter, cometh timely Death.

* * * * *

(*Spenser.*)

ASTROPHEL.

* * * * *



WOODS, hills, and rivers now are desolate,
Sith he is gone the which them all did
grace ;

And all the fields do wail their widow state,
Sith death their fairest flower did late deface ;
The fairest flower in field that ever grew
Was Astrophel ; that was we all may rue.

What cruel hand of cursed foe unknown
Hath cropt the stalk which bore so fair a flower ;
Untimely crop, before it well were grown,
And clean defaced in untimely hour ?
Great loss to all that ever him did see,
Great loss to all, but greatest loss to me.

Break now your garlands, oh ye shepherd's lasses,
Sith the fair flower which them adorned is gone ;
The flower which them adorned is gone to ashes,
Never again let lass put garland on ;
Instead of garland, wear sad cypress now,
And bitter elder, broken from the bough.

Nor ever sing the lovelays which he made :
Whoever made such lays of love as he ?
Nor ever read the riddles which he said
Unto yourselves, to make you merry glee ;
Your merry glee is now laid all abed,
Your merry maker now, alas! is dead.

Death, the devourer of all world's delight,
Hath robbed you, and reft from me my joy ;
Both you, and me, and all the world he quite
Hath robbed of joyance, and left sad annoy.
Joy of the world, and shepherd's pride was he,
Shepherds, hope never like again to see.

Oh Death, that hast us of such riches reft,
Tell us at least, what hast thou with it done ?
What is become of him, whose flower here left
Is but the shadow of his likeness gone ?
Scarce like the shadow of that which he was,
Nought like, but that he like a shade did pass.

But that immortal spirit, which was deckt
With all the dowries of celestial grace,
By sovereign choice from the heavenly quires select,
And lineally derived from angel's race ;
O, what is now of it become, aread,
Ay me ! can so divine a thing be dead ?

Ah no, it is not dead, nor can it die,
But lives for aye in blissful Paradise ;
Where, like a newborn babe, it soft doth lie
In bed of lilies wrapt in tender wise ;
And compassed all about with roses sweet,
And dainty violets, from head to feet.

There thousand birds, all of celestial brood,
To him do sweetly carol day and night,
And with strange notes, of him well understood,
Lull him asleep in angelic delight ;
Whilst in sweet dream to him presented be
Immortal beauties, which no eye may see.

But he them sees, and takes exceeding pleasure
Of their divine aspects, appearing plain,
And kindling love in him above all measure,
Sweet love, still joyous, never feeling pain ;
For what so goodly form he there doth see,
He may enjoy, from jealous rancour free.

There liveth he in everlasting bliss,
Sweet spirit, never fearing more to die,
Nor dreading harm from any foes of his,
Nor fearing savage beast's more cruelty ;
Whilst we here, wretches, wail his private lack,
And with vain vows do often call him back.

But live thou there still happy, happy spirit,
And give us leave thee here thus to lament ;
Not thee, that dost thy heaven's joy inherit,
But our own selves, that here in dole are drent ;
Thus do we weep and wail, and wear our eyes,
Mourning in others our own miseries.

(*Spenser.*)

ELEGY ON SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

* * * * *



ARD-HEARTED minds relent, and
Rigour's tears abound,
And Envy strangely rues his end, in
whom no fault she found ;
Knowledge her light hath lost, Valour hath slain her
knight ;
Sidney is dead, dead is my friend ; dead is the
world's delight ;

Place pensive wails his fall, whose presence was
her pride ;
Time crieth out, " My ebb is come, his life was
my spring tide ;"
Fame mourns in that she lost the ground of her
report ;
Each living wight laments his lack, and all in
sundry sorts.

He was (woe worth that word) to each well-thinking
mind,
A spotless friend, a matchless man, whose virtue
ever shined,

Declaring, in his thoughts, his life, and that he
writ,
Highest conceits, longest foresights, and deepest
works of wit.

He, only like himself, was second unto none,
Whose death (though life) we rue, and wrong, and
all in vain do moan ;
Their loss, not him, wail they that fill the world
with cries ;
Death slew not him, but he made death his ladder
to the skies.

* . * * *

(*Spenser.*)

ELEGY ON SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

* * * * *



RAWN was thy race aright from princely
line,

Nor less than such, by gifts that nature
gave,

(The common mother that all creatures have)
Doth virtue show, and princely lineage shine.

A king gave thee thy name ; a kingly mind
That God thee gave, who found it now too dear
For this base world, and hath resumed it, near
To sit in skies, and sort with powers divine.

Kent thy birthdays, and Oxford held thy youth ;
The heavens made haste, and stayed nor years, nor
time,

The fruits of age grew ripe in thy first prime,
Thy will thy words, thy words the seals of truth.

Great gifts, and wisdom rare employed thee thence,
To treat from kings with those more great than
kings ;

Such hope men had, to lay the highest things
On thy wise youth, to be transported hence.

Whence to sharp wars sweet Honour did thee call,
Thy country's love, religion, and thy friends ;
Of worthy men the marks, the lives, and ends,
And Her defence, for whom we labour all.

There didst thou vanquish shame, and tedious age,
Grief, sorrow, sickness, and base Fortune's might ;
Thy rising day saw never woeful night,
But past with praise from off this worldly stage.

Back to the camp, by thee that day was brought,
First, thine own death, and after, thy long fame,
Tears to the soldiers, the proud Castilian's shame,
Virtue expressed, and Honour truly taught.

What hath he lost that such great grace hath won ?
Young years for endless years, and hope unsure
Of Fortune's gifts, for wealth that still shall dure ;
O happy race, with so great praises run.

England doth hold thy limbs, that bred the same ;
Flanders thy valour, where it last was tried ;
The camp thy sorrow, where thy body died ;
Thy friends thy want ; the world thy virtue's fame.

Nations thy wit, our minds lay up thy love,
Letters thy learning, thy loss years long to come ;
In worthy hearts Sorrow hath made thy tomb ;
Thy soul and sprite enrich the heavens above.

Thy liberal heart embalmed in grateful tears,
Young sighs, sweet sighs, sage sighs bewail thy
fall ;

Envy her sting, and Spite hath left her gall ;
Malice herself a mourning garment wears.

* * * * *

(*Spenser.*)

VERSES BY CHYDICK TICHBORNE.

(Who was executed with Babington, 1586.)

THE NIGHT BEFORE HIS EXECUTION.



MY prime of youth is but a frost of cares ;
My feast of joy is but a dish of pain ;
My crop of corn is but a field of tares ;
And all my good is but vain hope of gain ;
The day is fled, and yet I saw no sun,
And now I live, and now my life is done.

The spring is past, and yet it hath not sprung ;
The fruit is dead, and yet the leaves are green ;
My youth is gone, and yet I am but young ;
I saw the world, and yet I was not seen ;
My thread is cut, and yet it is not spun,
And now I live, and now my life is done.

I sought my death, and found it in my womb ;
I looked for life, and saw it was a shade ;
I trod the earth, and knew it was my tomb,
And now I die, and now I am but made ;
The glass is full, and now my glass is run,
And now I live, and now my life is done.

AN ANSWER TO MR. TICHBORNE.

THY flower of youth is with a north wind
 blasted ;

Thy feast of joy is an idea found ;
Thy corn is shed, thy untimely harvest wasted ;
Thy good in ill, thy hope in hurt is drowned ;
Dark was thy day, and shadow was thy sun,
And, by such lights, thy life untimely spun.

Thy tale was nought, thy oratory told,
Thy fruit is rotten, and thy leaves are gone,
Thyself wert young in years, in time grown old,
The world accounts thee not worth thinking on ;
Thy thread of life's not cut, nor spun, but broken,
So let thy heart, though yet it be but open.

Thou sought'st thy death, and found'st it in desert ;
Thou look'dst for life, yet lewdly felt it fade ;
Thou trodd'st on earth, and now in earth thou art ;
And men may wish that thou hadst ne'er been
 made ;

Thy glory and thy glass are timeless run,
Which, Oh unhappy, by thyself was done.

(*Unknown.*)

A DIRGE.



ALL for the robin redbreast and the
wren,

Since over shady groves they hover,
And with flowers and leaves do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men ;
Call unto his funeral dole,
The ant, the field-mouse, and the mole,
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm,
And, when gay tombs are robbed, sustain no
harm ;
But keep the wolf far thence, that's foe to men,
For with his nails he'll dig them up again.

(*Webster*).

APPROACHING DEATH.

ADIEU, farewell earth's bliss,
This world uncertain is ;
Fond are life's lustful joys,
Death proves them all but toys ;
None from his darts can fly ;
I am sick, I must die ;
Lord, have mercy on us.

Rich men, trust not in wealth,
Gold cannot buy you health ;
Physic himself must fade,
All things to end are made ;
The plague full swift goes by ;
I am sick, I must die ;
Lord, have mercy on us.

Beauty is but a flower
Which wrinkles will devour,
Brightness falls from the air,
Queens have died young and fair,
Dust hath closed Helen's eye ;
I am sick, I must die ;
Lord, have mercy on us.

Strength stoops unto the grave,
Worms feed on Hector brave,
Swords may not fight with fate ;
Earth still holds ope her gate,
Come, come, the hells do cry ;
I am sick, I must die ;
Lord, have mercy on us.

Wit with his wantonness
Tasteth death's bitterness ;
Hell's executioner
Hath no ears for to hear
What vain art can reply ;
I am sick, I must die ;
Lord, have mercy on us.

Haste therefore, each degree,
To welcome destiny ;
Heaven is our heritage,
Earth but a player's stage ;
Mount we unto the sky
I am sick, I must die ;
Lord, have mercy on us.

(*Nash.*)

A DIRGE.



GLORES, pleasures, pomps, delights,
and ease

Can but please

The outward senses when the mind
Is, or untroubled, or by peace refined ;
Crowns may flourish and decay ;
Beauties shine, but fade away ;
Youth may revel, yet it must
Lie down in a bed of dust ;
Earthly honours flow, and waste ;
Time alone doth change, and last ;
Sorrows, mingled with contents, prepare
Rest for care ;
Love only reigns in death, though art
Can find no comfort for a broken heart.

(*Ford.*)

THE LIFE OF MAN.



HE world's a bubble, and the life of man
 Less than a span ;
 In his conception wretched, from the
 womb,
 So to the tomb ;
 Curs'd from his cradle, and brought up to years
 With cares and fears ;
 Who then to frail mortality shall trust
 But limns on water, or but writes in dust.

Yet whilst with sorrow here we live oppressed,
 What life is best ?
 Courts are but only superficial schools
 To dandle fools ;
 The rural part is turned into a den
 Of savage men ;
 And where's a city from foul vice so free,
 But may be termed the worst of all the three.

Domestic cares afflict the husband's bed,
 Or pains his head ;

Those that live single take it for a curse,
Or do things worse ;

These would have children, those that have them
moan,

Or wish them gone ;
What is it, then, to have, or have no, wife,
But single thralldom, or a double strife.

Our own affections still at home to please
Is a disease ;
To cross the seas to any foreign soil
Peril and toil ;
Wars with their noise affright us, when they cease
We're worse in peace ;
What then remains, but that we still should cry
For being born, and being born, to die.

(Lord Bacon.)

A DIRGE.




FEAR no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages ;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great,
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke ;
Care no more to clothe and eat,
To thee the reed is as the oak.
The sceptre, learning, physic must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning flash,
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone ;
Fear not slander, censure rash ;
Thou hast finish'd joy and moan.
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.


No exorciser harm thee,
Nor no witchcraft charm thee,

Ghost unlaid forbear thee,
Nothing ill come near thee,
Quiet consummation have,
And renowned be thy grave.
(Shakespeare.)

 O be, or not to be ; that is the question :
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
 And, by opposing, end them ? To die — to sleep—
 No more—and by a sleep to say we end
 The heartache and the thousand natural shocks
 That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
 Devoutly to be wished. To die—to sleep ;
 To sleep—perchance to dream—ay, there's the rub ;
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
 Must give us pause ; there's the respect
 That makes calamity of so long life ;
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
 The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,

When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin ? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn away,
And lose the name of action.

(Shakespeare.)

 HE should have died hereafter ;
There would have been a time for such a
word.

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusky death. Out, out, brief candle !
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more ; it is a tale,
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

(Shakespeare.)



HEAVEN and yourself

Had part in this fair maid ; now heaven
hath all,

And all the better is it for the maid :

Your part in her you could not keep from death,

But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.

The most you sought was her promotion,

For 'twas your heaven she should be advanced ;

And weep ye now, seeing she is advanced

Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself ?

O. in this love, ye love your child so ill,

That you run mad, seeing that she is well

(Shakespeare.)

WARWICK.



H, who is nigh? come to me, friend or foe,

And tell me who is victor, York or Warwick?

Why ask I that? my mangled body shows,
My blood, my want of strength, my sick heart shows

That I must yield my body to the earth,
And, by my fall, the conquest to my foe.
Thus yields the cedar to the axe's edge,
Whose arms gave shelter to the princely eagle,
Under whose shade the ramping lion slept,
Whose top branch overpeered Jove's spreading tree,

And kept low shrubs from winter's powerful wind.
These eyes, that now are dimmed with death's black veil,

Have been as piercing as the mid-day sun
To search the secret treasons of the world :
The wrinkles of my brow, now filled with blood,
Were likened oft to kingly sepulchres ;

For who lived king, but I could dig his grave ?
And who durst smile when Warwick bent his
brow ?

Lo, now my glory, smeared in dust and blood,
My parks, my walks, my manors that I had,
Even now forsake me, and of all my lands
Is nothing left me but my body's length.
Why, what is pomp, rule, reign, but earth and
dust ?

And live we how we can, yet die we must.

(Shakespeare.)



FOR God's sake, let us sit upon the ground,
And tell sad stories of the death of
kings ;

How some have been deposed, some slain in war,
Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed,
Some poisoned by their wives, some sleeping killed,
All murdered : for within the hollow crown
That rounds the mortal temples of a king,
Keeps Death his court, and there the antic sits,
Scoffing his state, and grinning at his pomp,
Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
To monarchize, be fear'd, and kill with looks ;
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
As if this flesh, which walls about our life,
Were brass impregnable ; and, humoured thus,
Comes at the last, and with a little pin
Bores through his castle wall—and farewell king !
(*Shakespeare.*)

ISABELLA.



H, I do fear thee, Claudio, and I quake,
Lest thou a feverous life should'st
entertain,

And six or seven winters more respect
Than a perpetual honour. Darest thou die ?
The sense of death is most in apprehension,
And the poor beetle, that we tread upon,
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great,
As when a giant dies.

* * * * *

CLAUDIO.

Ay, but to die, and go we know not where :
To lie in cold obstruction and to rot ;
This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod ; and the delighted spirit,
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
In thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice,
To be imprisoned in the viewless winds,
And blown with restless violence round about
The pendent world ; or to be, worse than worst,

Of those that lawless and incertain thought
Imagine howling ; 'tis too horrible !
The weariest and most loathed worldly life
That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment
Can lay on nature, is a paradise
To what we fear of death.

(Shakespeare.)

BE absolute for death ; either death or life
Shall thereby be the sweeter. Reason
thus with life :

If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing
That none but fools would keep : a breath thou
art,

Servile to all the skyey influences,
That dost this habitation, where thou keepest,
Hourly afflict : merely, thou art death's fool ;
For him thou labourest by thy flight to shun,
And yet runnest toward him still. Thou art not
noble ;

For all the accommodations that thou bearest
Are nursed by baseness. Thou art by no means
valiant ;

For thou dost fear the soft and tender fork
Of a poor worm. Thy best of rest is sleep,
And that thou oft provokest, yet grossly fear'st
Thy death, which is no more. Thou art not thy-
self ;

For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains
That issue out of dust. Happy thou art not ;
For what thou hast not, still thou strivest to get,

And what thou hast, forget'st. Thou art not certain ;

For thy complexion shifts to strange effects
After the moon. If thou art rich, thou art poor,
For, like an ass whose back with ingots bows,
Thou bearest thy heavy riches but a journey,
And death unloads thee. Friend hast thou none ;
For thine own bowels, which do call thee sire,
The mere effusion of thy proper loins,
Do curse the gout, serpigo, and the rheum,
For ending thee no sooner. Thou hast nor youth
nor age,

But, as it were, an after-dinner's sleep,
Dreaming on both ; for all thy blessed youth
Becomes as aged, and doth beg the alms
Of palsied eld ; and, when thou art old and rich,
Thou hast neither heat, affection, limb, nor beauty,
To make thy riches pleasant. What's yet in this
That bears the name of life ? Yet in this life
Lie hid moe thousand deaths : yet death we fear,
That makes these odds all even.

(*Shakespeare.*)

A DIRGE.



ULL fathom five thy father lies ;
Of his bones are coral made ;
Those are pearls that were his eyes ;
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea nymphs hourly ring his knell,
Hark ! now I hear them —ding, dong, bell.
(Shakespeare.)

ON MARGARET RATCLIFFE.



ARBLE, weep, for thou dost cover
A dead beauty underneath thee,
Rich as nature could bequeath thee;
Grant then, no rude hand remove her.
All the gazers on the skies
Read not, in fair heaven's story,
Expresser truth, or truer glory,
Than they might in her bright eyes.

Rare as wonder was her wit,
And like nectar ever flowing;
Till time, strong by her bestowing,
Conquered hath both life and it.
Life whose grief was out of fashion
In these times; few so have rued
Fate in a brother. To conclude,
For wit, feature, and true passion,
Earth, thou hast not such another.

(Ben Jonson.)

LIFE AND DEATH.



HE ports of death are sins, of life good
deeds,

Through which our merit leads us to our
meeds.

How wilful blind is he then that should stray,
And hath it in his power to make his way.
This world death's region is, the other life's,
And here it should be one of our first strifes,
So to front death, as men might judge us past it ;
For good men but see death, the wicked taste it.

(Ben Jonson.)

ON ELIZABETH L. H.



WOULD'ST thou hear what man can
say,

In a little? reader, stay.

Underneath this stone doth lie
As much beauty as could die ;
Which in life did harbour give
To more virtue than doth live.
If at all she had a fault,
Leave it buried in this vault.
One name was Elizabeth,
The other, let it sleep with death ;
Fitter, where it died, to tell,
Than that it lived at all. Farewell.

(Ben Jonson.)

ON THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.



UNDERNEATH this marble hearse
Lies the subject of all verse,
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother ;

Death, ere thou hast slain another
Learned, fair, and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

(Ben Jonson.)

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.



HELEN OF KIRKCONNELL.



WISH I were where Helen lies,
Night and day on me she cries,
O that I were where Helen lies,
On fair Kirkconnell lea.

* * * * *

O Helen, fair beyond compare,
I'll mak' a garland o' your hair
Shall bind my heart for evermair,
Until the day I die.

O that I were where Helen lies,
Night and day on me she cries,
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says, "Haste and come to me."

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
Were I with thee I would be blest,
Where thou liest low and tak'st thy rest,
On fair Kirkconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn o'er my e'en,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirkconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies,
Night and day on me she cries,
And I am weary of the skies,
For her sake that died for me.

(*Unknown.*)

THE THREE RAVENS. 1611.



HERE were three ravens sat on a tree,
They were as black as black might be ;
The one of them said to his mate,
“ Where may we our breakfast take ? ”
“ Down in yonder greeny field
There lies a knight slain under shield.”
“ His hounds they lie down at his feet,
So well they can their master keep ;
His hawks they fly so eagerly,
There is no fowl dare come him nigh.”

Down there came a fallow doe,
As great with young as she might go ;
She lifted up his bloody head,
And kissed his wounds that were so red ;
She got him up upon her back,
And carried him down by yon lake ;
She buried him before the prime,
She was dead herself ere evensong time ;
God send every gentleman
Such hawks, such hounds, and such a leman.

(*Unknown.*)

GLORIA LATA VIA. 1612?



HOUGH life be short and man doth, as
the sun,
His journey finish in a little space,
The way is wide an honest course to run,
And great the glories of a virtuous race,
That at the last do our just labours crown
With three-fold wreath, love, honour, and renown.

Nor can night's shadow or the Stygian deep
Conceal fair Virtue from the world's wide eye ;
The more oppressed, the more she strives to peep,
And raise her rose-bound golden head on high ;
When epicures, the wretch, and worldly slave
Shall rot in shame, alive, and in the grave.

(*Peacham.*)



HIS world a hunting is,
The prey poor Man, the Nimrod fierce
is Death ;

His speedy greyhounds are
Lust, sickness, envy, care,
Strife that ne'er falls amiss,
With all those ills which haunt us while we breathe.
Now if by chance we fly
Of these the eager chase,
Old age with stealing pace
Casts on his nets, and there we panting die.

(*William Drummond.*)

ON MAN'S MORTALITY. 1640.



LIKE to the falling of a star,
Or as the flights of eagles are,
Or like the fresh Spring's gaudy hue,
Or silver drops of morning dew,
Or like a wind that chafes the flood,
Or bubbles which on water stood,—
Even such is man ;—whose borrowed light
Is straight called in and paid to-night.
The wind blóws out, the bubble dies,
The Spring entombed in Autumn lies,
The dew's dried up, the star is shot,
The flight is past,—and man forgot.

(*F. Beaumont.*)

ON MAN'S MORTALITY. 1629.

LIKE as the damask rose you see,
Or like the blossom on the tree,
Or like the dainty flower of May,
Or like the morning to the day,
Or like the sun, or like the shade,
Or like the gourd which Jonas had,—
E'en such is man ;—whose thread is spun,
Drawn out, and cut, and so is done. —
The rose withers, the blossom blasteth,
The flower fades, the morning hasteth,
The sun sets, the shadow flies,
The gourd consumes,—and man he dies.

Like to the grass that's newly sprung,
Or like a tale that's new begun,
Or like the bird that's here to-day,
Or like the pearled dew of May,
Or like an hour, or like a span,
Or like the singing of a swan,—
E'en such is man ;—who lives by breath,
Is here, now there, in life and death.—

The grass withers, the tale is ended,
The bird is flown, the dew's ascended,
The hour is short, the span not long,
The swan's near death,—man's life is done.

(*Wastell.*)

SWEET day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
 The bridal of the earth and sky,
 Sweet dew shall weep thy fall to-night,
 For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,
 Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
 Thy root is ever in its grave,
 And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
 A box where sweets compacted lie,
 My music shows you have your closes,
 And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
 Like seasoned timber, never gives,
 But, when the whole world turns to coal,
 That chiefly lives.

(*Herbert.*)

ELEGY ON A GIRL.



WHAT needs complaints

When she a place

Has with the race

Of saints ?

In endless mirth,

She thinks not on

What's said, or done

In earth ;

She sees no tears,

Or any tone

Of thy deep groan

She hears ;

Nor does she mind,

Or think on't now,

That ever thou

Wast kind ;

But, changed above,

She likes not there,

As she did here,

Thy love.

Forbear therefore,
And lull asleep
Thy woes, and weep
No more.

(*Herrick.*)

TO DEATH.



THOU bidst me come away,
And I'll no longer stay,
Than for to shed some tears
For faults of former years,
And to repent some crimes
Done in the present times ;
And, next, to take a bit
Of bread, and wine with it ;
To don my robes of love,
Fit for the place above ;
To gird my loins about
With charity throughout ;
And so to travel hence
With feet of innocence ;
These done, I'll only cry
God's mercy, and so die.

(*Herrick.*)

ETERNITY.



YEARS, and age, farewell,
Behold, I go
Where I do know
Infinity to dwell.

And these mine eyes shall see
All times, how they
Are lost in the sea
Of vast eternity.

Where never moon shall sway
The stars, but she
And night shall be
Drowned in one endless day.

(Herrick.)

THE WHITE ISLAND.



IN this world, the isle of dreams,
While we sit by sorrow's streams
Tears and terrors are our themes,

Reciting ;

But when once from hence we fly,
More and more approaching nigh
Unto young Eternity,

Uniting

In that Whiter Island, where
Things are evermore sincere,
Candour here and lustre there

Delighting ;

There no monstrous fancies shall
Out of hell a horror call,
Or create, or cause at all

Affrighting.

There, in calm and cooling sleep
We our eyes shall never steep,
But eternal watch shall keep,

Attending

Pleasures, such as shall pursue
Me immortalized, and you,
And fresh joys, as never too
Have ending.
(*Herrick.*)


ON A LADY THAT DIED IN CHILD-BED.



As gillyflowers do but stay
To blow, and seed, and so away ;
So you, sweet Lady, sweet as May,
The garden's glory lived a while,
To lend the world your scent and smile ;
But when your own fair print was set
Once in a virgin flosculet,
Sweet as yourself and newly blown,
To give that life resigned your own ;
But so, as still the mother's power
Lives in the pretty lady flower.

(*Herrick.*)

ON A VIRGIN.

ERE a solemn fast we keep,
While all beauty lies asleep ;
Hushed be all things, no noise here
But the toning of a tear,
Or a sigh of such as bring .
Cowslips for her covering.

(*Herrick.*)

TO HIS WINDING-SHEET.



COME thou, who art the wine and wit
Of all I've writ ;
The grace, the glory, and the best
Piece of the rest.
Thou art of what I did intend
The all, and end ;
And what was made, was made to meet
Thee, thee my sheet.
Come then, and be to my chaste side
Both bed, and bride ;
We two, as reliques left, will hav
One rest, one grave ;
And, hugging close, we will not fear
Lust entering here,
Where all desires are dead, or cold
As is the mould,
And all affections are forgot,
Or trouble not.
Here, here the slaves and prisoners be
From shackles free ;
And weeping widows, long opprest,
Do here find rest ;

The wronged client ends his laws
Here, and his cause ;
Here those long suits of Chancery lie
Quiet, or die ;
And all Star Chamber bills do cease,
Or hold their peace !
Here needs no Court for our Request,
Where all are blest,
All wise, all equal, and all just
Alike, i' the dust.
Nor need we here to fear the frown
Of Court, or Crown ;
Where Fortune bears no sway o'er things,
There all are kings.
In this securer place we'll keep,
As lulled asleep ;
Or for a little time we'll lie,
As robes laid by
To be another day re-worn,
Turned, but not torn,
Or, like old testaments engrost,
Locked up, not lost ;
And for a while lie here concealed,
To be revealed
Next at that great Platonic year,
And then meet here.

(*Herrick.*)

ON DEATH.



THE glories of our birth and state
Are shadows, not substantial things ;
There is no armour against fate,
Death lays his icy hand on kings ;
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill,
But their strong nerves at last must yield,
They tame but one another still ;
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath,
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow,
Then boast no more your mighty deeds ;
Upon Death's purple altar now
See where the victor victim bleeds ;

Your heads must come
To the cold tomb ;
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in their dust.
(*Shirley.*)

ON DEATH.



VICTORIOUS men of earth, no more
Proclaim how wide your empires are ;
Though you bind in every shore,
And your triumphs reach as far
As night or day,
Yet you, proud monarchs, must obey,
And mingle with forgotten ashes, when
Death calls ye to the crowd of common men.

Devouring famine, plague, and war,
Each able to undo mankind,
Death's servile emissaries are ;
Nor to these alone confined,
He hath at will
More quaint and subtle ways to kill,
A smile, or kiss, as he will use the art,
Shall have the cunning skill to break a heart.
(*Shirley.*)

DEATH.



T a melancholy season,
As alone I musing sat,
I fell, I know not how, to reason
With myself of man's estate,
How subject unto death and fate ;
Names that mortals so affright,
As turns the brightest day to night,
And spoils of living the delight ;
With which—so soon as life is tested—
Lest we should too happy be,
Even in our infancy—
Our joys are quashed, our hopes are blasted ;
For the first thing that we hear,
Used to still us when we cry ;
The nurse, to keep the child in fear,
Discreetly tells it, it must die,
Be put in a hole, eaten with worms,
Presenting death in thousand ugly forms,
Which tender minds so entertain,
As ever after to retain ;

By which means we are cowards bred,
Nursed with unnecessary dread,
And ever dream of dying,—till we are dead.

Death, thou child's bugbear, thou fool's terror,
Ghastly set forth the weak to awe,
Begot by fear, increased by error,
Whom none but a sick fancy ever saw,—
Thou, who art only feared
By the illiterate and timorous herd

But, by the wise,
Esteemed the greatest of felicities—
Why, sithence by a universal law
Entailed upon mankind thou art,
Should any dread, or seek to avoid thy dart,
When, of the two, fear is the greatest smart ?
O senseless man, who vainly flies
What Heaven has ordained to be

The remedy
Of all thy mortal pains and miseries.

Sorrow, want, sickness, injury, mischance,
The happiest man's certain inheritance,
With all the various ills
Which the wide world with mourning fills,
Or by corruption or disaster bred,
Are for the living all, not for the dead.

When life's sun sets, death is a bed
With sable curtains spread,
 Where we lie down
To rest the weary limbs and careful head,
And to the good a bed of down ;
There, there no frightful tintamarre
Of tumult in the many-headed beast,
Nor all the loud artillery of war
Can fright us from that sweet, that happy rest
Wherewith the still and silent grave is blest ;
Nor all the rattle that above they keep
Break our repose, or rouse us from that everlasting
 sleep.

The grave is privileged from noise and care,
From tyranny and wild oppression ;
Violence has little power there,
E'en worst oppressors let the dead alone ;
We're there secure from prince's frowns,
The insolences of the great,
From the rude hands of barbarous clowns,
And policies of those that sweat
The simple to betray and cheat ;
Or if some one with sacrilegious hand
Would persecute us after death,
His want of power shall his will withstand,

And he shall only lose his breath ;
For all that he by that shall gain
Will be dishonour for his pain,
And all the clutter he can keep
Will only serve to rock us while we soundly sleep.

The dead no more converse with tears,
With idle jealousies and fears ;
No danger makes the dead man start,
No idle love torments his heart,
No loss of substance, parents, children, friends,
Either his peace or sleep offends ;
Nought can provoke his anger or despite,
He out of combat is, and injury ;
'Tis he of whom philosophers so write,
And who would be a Stoic, let him die ;
For whilst we living are, what man is he,
Who the world's wrongs does either feel or see,
That possibly from passion can be free ?

But must put on
A noble indignation,
Warranted both by virtue and religion.

Then let me die, and no more subject be
Unto the tyrannizing powers
To which this short mortality of ours

Is either preordained by destiny,
Or bound by natural infirmity.
We nothing, whilst we here remain,
But sorrow and repentance gain,
Nay, even our very joys are pain,
Or, being past,
To woe and torment turn at last ;
Nor is there yet any sacred place
Where we can sanctuary find,
No man's a friend to sorrow and disgrace,
But, flying one, we other mischiefs meet,
Or if we kinder entertainment find,
We bear the seeds of sorrow in the mind,
And keep our frailty when we shift our feet ;
Whilst we are men we still our passions have,
And he that is most free is his own slave ;
There is no refuge but the friendly grave.

(*Cotton.*)

LYCIDAS.



ET once more, O ye laurels, and once
more,

Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year ;
Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear
Compels me to disturb your season due :
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer :
Who would not sing for Lycidas ? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme ;
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, sisters of the sacred well
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring,
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string ;
Hence with denial vain and coy excuse :
So may some gentle Muse

With lucky words favour my destined urn,
And as he passes turn
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill,
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star, that rose at evening bright,
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering
wheel.

Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Tempered to the oaten flute ;
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven
heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long,
And old Damætas loved to hear our song.

But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone and never must return ;
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn ;

The willows and the hazel copses green
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays ;—
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers that their gay wardrobe wear
When first the whitethorn blows,
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.
Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the craggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream :
Ay me ! I fondly dream—
Had ye been there—for what could that have done ?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore;
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son
Whom universal nature did lament ?
When by the rout that made the hideous roar
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore.
Alas ! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse ?
Were it not better done, as others use,

To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,
And slits the thin spun life,—“But not the praise,”
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears,
“Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistening foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad Rumour lies;
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect they meed.”

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oar proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea
That came in Neptune's plea;
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap had doomed this gentle swain,

And questioned every gust of rugged winds,
That blows from off each beaked promontory ;
They knew not of his story,
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed,
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge,
Like to that sanguine flower, inscribed with woe ;
“ Ah ! who hath reft,” quoth he, “ my dearest
pledge ? ”
Last came, and last did go
The pilot of the Galilean lake ;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain,
The golden opes, the iron shuts amain ;
He shook his mitred locks and stern bespake,
“ How well could I have spared for thee, young
swain,
Enow of such as, for their bellies sake,
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold ;
Of other care they little reckoning make

Than how to scramble at the shearer's feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest ;
Blind mouths, that scarce themselves know how to
hold

A sheephook, or have learned aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's heart belongs.
What recks it them ? What need they ? They are
sped ;

And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw ;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swollen with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread ;
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said ;
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams, return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes

That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers ;
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crowtoe and pale jessamine,
The white pink and the pansy freaked with jet,
 The glowing violet,
The musk rose and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears ;
Bid amarantus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For, so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise ;
Ay me ! whilst thee the shores and sounding
 seas
Wash far away,—where'er thy bones are hurled,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps, under the whelming tide,
Visitest the bottom of the monstrous world,
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks towards Namancos and Bayona's hold,—
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth,
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor ;
So sinks the daystar in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky :
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high
Through the dear grace of Him that walked the
waves,

Where, other groves and other streams among,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more,
Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals grey ;
He touched the tender stops of various quills,

With eager thought warbling his Doric lay ;
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay ;
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue,
To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.

(*Milton.*)

ON THE DEATH OF OLIVER
CROMWELL.



• • • • •
THOUGH our best notes are treason to his
fame,
Joined with the loud applause of public
voice,
Since Heaven, what praise we offer to his name,
Hath rendered too authentic by its choice ;
• • • • •

Yet 'tis our duty, and our interest too,
Such monuments as we can build to raise ;
Lest all the world prevent what we should do,
And claim a title in him by their praise.
• • • • •

His grandeur he derived from heaven alone,
For he was great ere fortune made him so ;
And wars, like mists that rise against the sun,
Made him but greater seem, not greater grow.

No borrowed bays his temples did adorn,
But to our crown he did fresh jewels bring ;
Nor was his virtue poisoned soon as born,
With the too early thoughts of being king.

• • • • •

He, private, marked the faults of others' sway.
And set as sea-marks for himself to shun ;
Not like rash monarchs, who their youth betray
By acts their age too late would wish undone.

And yet dominion was not his design ;
We owe that blessing, not to him, but Heaven,
Which to fair acts rewards unsought did join,
Rewards that less to him than us were given.

• • • • •

He fought secure of fortune as of fame ;
Still by new maps the island might be shown,
Of conquests, which he strewed where'er he came
Thick as the galaxy with stars is sown.

• • • • •

Peace was the prize of all his toils and care,
Which war had banished and did now restore ;
Bologna's walls thus mounted in the air
To seat themselves more surely than before.

• • • • •

Nor was he like those stars which only shine
When to pale mariners they storms portend,
He had his calmer influence, and his mien
Did love and majesty together blend.

'Tis true, his countenance did imprint an awe,
And naturally all souls to his did bow,
As wands of divination downward draw,
And point to beds where sovereign gold dot
grow.

• • • • •

When absent, yet we conquered in his right,
For though some meaner artist's skill were shown
In mingling colours, or in placing light,
Yet still their fair designment was his own.

For from all tempers he could service draw,
The worth of each with its alloy he knew ;
And as the confidant of nature saw
How she complexions did divide and brew.

Or he their single virtues did survey
By intuition in his own large breast,
Where all the rich ideas of them lay,
That were the rule and measure to the rest.

• • • • •

From this high spring our foreign conquests flow,
Which yet more glorious triumphs do portend ;
Since their commencement to his arms they
owe,
If springs as high as fountains may ascend.

He made us freemen of the continent,
Whom nature did like captives treat before ;
To nobler preys the English lion sent,
And taught him first in Belgian walks to roar.

That old unquestioned pirate of the land,
Proud Rome, with dread the fate of Dunkirk
heard,
And, trembling, wished behind more Alps to stand,
Although an Alexander were her guard.

By his command we boldly crossed the Line,
And bravely fought where southern stars arise ;
We traced the far-fetched gold unto the mine,
And that which bribed our fathers made our prize.

* * * * *

Nor died he when his ebbing fame went less,
But when fresh laurels courted him to live ;
He seemed but to prevent some new success,
As if above what triumph earth could give.

His latest victories still thickest came,
As near the centre motion doth increase,
Till he, pressed down by his own weighty name,
Did, like the vestal, under spoils de cease.

• • • • •

His ashes in a peaceful urn shall rest,
His name a great example stands to show
How strangely high endeavours may be blest,
Where piety and valour jointly go.

(*Dryden.*)

ON ELEANORA, COUNTESS OF ABINGDON.



S, when some great and gracious monarch
dies,

Soft whispers first, and mournful murmurs
rise

Among the sad attendants ; then the sound
Soon gathers voice, and spreads the news around
Through town and country, till the dreadful blast
Is blown to distant colonies at last,
Who then, perhaps, were offering vows in vain
For his long life, and for his happy reign ;
So slowly, by degrees, unwilling Fame
Did matchless Eleanora's fate proclaim,
Till public as the loss the news became.
The nation felt it in the extremest parts,
With eyes o'erflowing and with bleeding hearts ;
But most the poor, whom daily she supplied,
Beginning to be such but when she died ;
For while she lived they slept in peace by night,
Secure of bread as of returning light,
And with such firm dependence on the day,
That need grew pampered, and forgot to pray ;

So sure the dole, so ready at their call,
They stood prepared to see the manna fall.
Such multitudes she fed, she clothed, she nursed,
That she herself might fear her wanting first ;
Of her five talents other five she made,
Heaven, that had largely given, was largely paid ;
And in few lives, in wondrous few, we find
A fortune better fitted to the mind ;
Nor did her alms from ostentation fall,
Or proud desire of praise ; the soul gave all ;
Unbribed it gave, or if a bribe appear,
No less than heaven, to heap huge treasures there.
Want passed for merit at her open door,
Heaven saw he safely might increase his poor,
And trust their sustenance with her so well,
As not to be at charge of miracle.
None could be needy whom she saw or knew,
All in the compass of her sphere she drew ;
He who could touch her garment was as sure
As the first Christians of the Apostle's cure.
The distant heard by fame her pious deeds,
And laid her up for their extremest needs,
A future cordial for a fainting mind,
For what was ne'er refused all hoped to find,
Each in his turn. The rich might freely come,
As to a friend, but to the poor 'twas home.

As to some holy house the afflicted came,
The hunger-starved, the naked, and the lame,
Want and diseases fled before her name.
For zeal like hers her servants were too slow,
She was the first, where need required, to go,
Herself the foundress and attendant too.
Sure she had guests sometimes to entertain,
Guests in disguise, of her great Master's train ;
Her Lord himself might come, for aught we know,
Since in a servant's form he lived below ;
Beneath her roof He might be pleased to stay ;
Or some benighted angel in his way
Might ease his wings, and seeing heaven appear
In its best work of mercy, think it there,
Where all the deeds of charity and love
Were, in as constant method as above,
All carried on, all of a piece with theirs,
As free her alms, as diligent her cares,
As loud her praises and as warm her prayers.

* * * * *

Now, as all virtues keep the middle line,
Yet somewhat more to one extreme incline,
Such was her soul ; abhorring avarice,
Bounteous, but almost bounteous to a vice ;
Had she given more it had profusion been,
And turned the excess of goodness into sin.

These virtues raised her fabric to the sky,
For that which is next heaven is Charity,
But as high turrets for their airy steep
Require foundations in proportion deep,
And lofty cedars as far upwards shoot
As to the nether heavens they drive the root,
So low did her secure foundation lie,
She was not humble, but Humility ;
Scarcely she knew that she was great, or fair,
Or wise, beyond what other women are ;
Or, which is better, knew, but never durst compare ;
For to be conscious of what all admire,
And not be vain, advances virtue higher ;
But still she found, or rather thought she found
Her own worth wanting, others' to abound,
Ascribed above their due to every one,
Unjust and scanty to herself alone.
Such her devotion was as might give rules
Of speculation to disputing schools,
And teach us equally the scales to hold
Betwixt the two extremes of hot and cold ;
That pious heat may moderately prevail,
And we be warmed, but not be scorched with
zeal.
Business might shorten, not disturb her prayer ;
Heaven had the best, if not the greater share ;

An active life long orisons forbids,
Yet still she prayed, for still she prayed by deeds.
Her every day was Sabbath, only free
From hours of prayer for hours of charity ;
Such as the Jews from servile toil released,
Where works of mercy were a part of rest ;
Such as blest angels exercise above,
Varied with sacred hymns and acts of love ;
Such Sabbaths as that one she now enjoys,
E'en that perpetual one, which she employs
(For such vicissitudes in heaven there are),
In praise alternate, and alternate prayer.
All this she practised here, that when she sprung
Amidst the choirs, at the first sight she sung,
Sung, and was sung herself in angels' lays,
For praising her they did her Maker praise.
All offices of heaven so well she knew
Before she came, that nothing there was new ;
And she was so familiarly received,
As one returning, not as one arrived.

* * * * *

A wife as tender, and as true withal,
As the first woman was before her fall ;
Made for the man of whom she was a part,
Made to attract his eyes and keep his heart,
A second Eve, but by no crime accurst,

As beauteous, not as brittle, as the first.
Had she been first, still Paradise had been,
And death had found no entrance by her sin ;
So she not only had preserved from ill
Her sex and ours, but lived their pattern still.

* * * *

Her fellow saints with busy care will look,
For her blest name in Fate's eternal book,
And, pleased to be outdone, with joy will see
Numberless virtues, endless charity ;
But more will wonder at so short an age,
To find a blank beyond the thirtieth page,
And with a pious fear begin to doubt
The piece imperfect, and the rest torn out ;
But 'twas her Saviour's time, and could there
be

A copy near the original, 'twas she.
As precious gums are not for lasting fire,
They but perfume the temple, and expire,
So was she soon exhaled, and vanished hence,
A short sweet odour of a vast expense.
She vanished, we can scarcely say she died,
For but a now did heaven and earth divide ;
She passed serenely with a single breath,
This moment perfect health, the next was death,
One sigh did her eternal bliss assure,

So little penance needs when souls are almost
pure.

As gentle dreams our waking thoughts pursue,
Or one dream passed we slide into a new,
So close they follow, such wild order keep,
We think ourselves awake, and are asleep ;
So softly death succeeded life in her,
She did but dream of heaven, and she was
there.

No pains she suffered, nor expired with noise,
Her soul was whispered out with God's still
voice,

As an old friend is beckoned to a feast
And treated like a long familiar guest ;
He took her as he found, but found her so
As one in hourly readiness to go,
E'en on that day, in all her trim prepared
As early notice she from heaven had heard,
And some descending courier from above
Had given her timely warning to remove,
Or counselled her to dress the nuptial room,
For on that night the Bridegroom was to come.
He kept his hour, and found her where she lay
Clothed all in white, the livery of the day.
Scarce had she sinned in thought, or word, or act,
Unless omissions were to pass for fact,

That hardly Death a consequence could draw
To make her liable to Nature's law.
And that she died, we only have to show
The mortal part of her she left below ;
The rest, so smooth, so suddenly she went,
Looked like translation through the firmament,
Or like the fiery car on the third errand sent.

* * * * *

Be what, and where thou art ; to wish thy place
Were, in the best, presumption more than grace.
Thy relics (such thy works of mercy are),
Have in this poem been my holy care ;
As earth thy body keeps, thy soul the sky,
So shall this verse preserve thy memory,
For thou shalt make it live, because it sings of
thee.

(*Dryden.*)

ON THE SHORTNESS OF MAN'S LIFE.



MARK that swift arrow, how it cuts the
air,

How it outruns thy following eye ;
Use all persuasions now, and try
If thou can'st call it back, or stay it there.
That way it went, but thou shalt find

No tract is left behind.

Fool ! 'tis thy life, and the fond archer thou.
Of all the time thou'st shot away
I'll bid thee fetch but yesterday,
And it shall be too hard a task to do.
Besides repentance, what can'st find

That it hath left behind ?

Our life is carried with too strong a tide
A doubtful cloud our substance bears,
And is the horse of all our years ;
Each day doth on a winged whirlwind ride ;
We and our glass run out, and must

Both render up our dust.

But his past life who without grief can see,
Who never thinks his end too near,

But says to Fame, "Thou art mine heir,"
That man extends life's natural brevity ;
This is,—this is the only way
To outlive Nestor in a day.

(*Cowley.*)

LIFE AND FAME.



LIFE ! thou Nothing's younger brother,
So like that one might take one for the
other,

What's somebody ? or nobody ?

In all the cobwebs of the schoolmen's trade

We no such nice distinction woven see

As is "To be," or "Not to be."

Dream of a shadow ! a reflection made

From the false glories of the gay reflected bow

Is a more solid thing than thou.

Vain, weak-built isthmus, which dost proudly
rise

Up betwixt two eternities,

Yet can'st nor wave nor wind sustain,

But broken and o'erwhelmed, the endless oceans
meet again.

And with what rare inventions do we strive

Ourselves then to survive,

Wise, subtle arts, and such as well befit

That Nothing, man's no-wit.

Some with vast costly tombs would purchase it,
And by the proofs of death pretend to live,
“Here lies the great—” false marble! where?
Nothing but small and sordid dust lies there.
Some build enormous mountain-palaces,
The fools and architects to please;
A lasting life on well-hewn stone they rear;
So he, who on the Egyptian shore
Was slain so many hundred years before,
Lives still, (O life most happy and most dear!
O life that epicures envy to hear!)
Lives in the dropping ruins of his amphitheatre.
His father-in-law a higher place does claim,
In the seraphic entity of Fame,
 He, since that toy his death,
Does fill all mouths and breathes in all men's breath.
'Tis true, the two immortal syllables remain,
 But O ye learned men, explain
What essence, what existence this?
What substance, what subsistence, what hypostasis
 In six poor letters is?
In those alone does the great Caesar live,
'Tis all the conquered world could give.
We poets, madder yet than all,
With a refined fantastic vanity,
Think we not only have, but give eternity;

Fain would I see that prodigal
Who his to-morrow would bestow
For all old Homer's life, e'er since he died, till
now.

(*Cowley.*)

LIFE.



WE'RE ill by these grammarians used,
We are abused by words, grossly
abused ;

From the maternal tomb
To the grave's fruitful womb,
We call here, Life ; but Life's a name
That nothing here can truly claim ;
This wretched inn, where we scarce stay to bait,
We call our dwelling-place ;
We call one step a race ;
But angels, in their full-enlightened state,
Angels who live, and know what 'tis to be,
Who all the nonsense of our language see,
Who speak things, and our words their ill-drawn
pictures scorn,
When we by a foolish figure say,
" Behold an old man dead," then they
Speak properly, and cry, " Behold a man-child
born."

My eyes are opened, and I see
Through the transparent fallacy ;

Because we seem wisely to talk
Like men of business, and for business walk
 From place to place,
And mighty voyages we take,
And mighty journeys seem to make
O'er sea and land, the little point that has no
 space,

Because we fight, and battles gain,
Some "Captives" call, and say, "The rest are
 slain,"

Because we heap up yellow earth, and so,
Rich, valiant, wise, and virtuous seem to grow,
Because we draw a long nobility
From hieroglyphic proofs of heraldry,
And impudently talk of a posterity,
And like Egyptian chroniclers
Who write of twenty thousand years,
With maravedies make the account,
That single time might to a sum amount,
We grow at last by custom to believe
 That really we live ;
Whilst all these shadows that for things we take,
Are but the empty dreams which in Death's sleep
 we make.

But these fantastic errors of our dream

Lead us to solid wrong ;
We pray God our friends' torments to prolong,
And wish uncharitably for them
To be as long a dying as Methusalem ;
The ripened soul longs from his prison to come,
But we would seal and sew up, if we could, the
womb ;
We seek to close and plaster up by art
The cracks and breaches of the extended shell,
And in that narrow cell
Would rudely force to dwell
The noble vigorous bird already winged to part.
(Cowley.)

ELEGIAC POEMS.
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.



ESSAY ON MAN.

• • • • •

HEAVEN from all creatures hides the book
of fate,
All but the page prescribed, their present
state ;

From brutes what men, from men what spirits know :
Or who could suffer being here below ?

The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play ?
Pleased to the last, he crops the flowery food,
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.

O blindness to the future ! kindly given,
That each may fill the circle marked by Heaven,
Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,

A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
Atoms or systems into ruin hurled,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.

Hope humbly then ; with trembling pinions soar ;
Wait the great teacher Death ; and God adore.

What future bliss, He gives thee not to know,
But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.
Hope springs eternal in the human breast,
Man never is, but always to be, blest.
The soul, uneasy and confined, from home
Rests, and expatiates in a life to come.
Lo, the poor Indian ! whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears Him in the wind ;
His soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk or milky way ;
Yet simple nature to his hope has given,
Behind the cloud-topped hill, a humbler heaven ;
Some safer world in depths of woods embraced,
Some happier island in the watery waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold ;
To be content his natural desire,
He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire ;
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.

• • • • •

(*Pope.*)

THE GRAVE.



WHILE some affect the sun, and some the
shade,
Some flee the city, some the hermitage,
Their aims as various as the roads they take,
In journeying through life,—the task be mine
To paint the gloomy horrors of the tomb,
The appointed place of rendezvous, where all
These travellers meet. Thy succours I implore,
Eternal King, whose potent arm sustains
The keys of Hell and Death.—The Grave, dread
thing !
Men shiver when thou art named. Nature ap-
palled
Shakes off her wanted firmness.—Ah ! how dark
Thy long-extended realms and rueful wastes
Where nought but silence reigns, and night, dark
night,
Dark as was chaos ere the infant sun
Was rolled together, or had tried his beams
Athwart the gloom profound. The sickly taper,
By glimmering through thy low-browed misty
vaults

Furred round with mouldy damps and ropy slime,
Lest fall a supernumerary horror,
And only serves to make thy night more irksome.
Well do I know thee by thy trusty yew,
Cheerless, unsocial plant, that loves to dwell
Midst skulls and coffins, epitaphs and worms,
Where light-heeled ghosts, and visionary shades,
Beneath the wan cold moon, as fame reports,
Embodied, thick, perform their mystic rounds ;
No other merriment, dull tree, is thine.
See yonder hallowed fane, the pious work
Of names once famed, now dubious or forgot,
And buried midst the wreck of things which were :
There lie interred the more illustrious dead.
The wind is up,—hark how it howls,—Methinks
Till now I never heard a sound so dreary ;
Doors creak, and windows clap, and night's foul
bird,
Rocked in the spire, screams loud ; the gloomy
aisles,
Black plastered, and hung round with shreds and
scutcheons
And tattered coats of arms, send back the sound
Laden with heavier airs from the low vaults,
The mansions of the dead. Roused from their
slumbers,

In grim array the grisly spectres rise,
Grim, horrible, and obstinately sullen,
Pass and repass, hushed as the foot of night.
Again the screech-owl shrieks, ungracious sound !
I'll hear no more ; it makes one's blood run chill.
Quite round the pile a row of reverend elms,
Coeval near with that, all ragged show,
Long lashed by the rude winds ; some rift half
down

Their branchless trunks, others so thin at top
That scarce two crows can lodge in the same tree.
Strange things, the neighbours say, have happened
here,

Wild shrieks have issued from the hollow tombs,
Dead men have come again and walked about,
And the great bell has tolled unrun, untouched ;
Such tales their cheer at wake or gossiping,
When it draws near to witching time of night.
Oft in the lone churchyard at night I've seen,
By glimpse of moonshine chequering through the
trees,

The schoolboy, with his satchel in his hand,
Whistling aloud to bear his courage up,
And lightly tripping o'er the long flat stones,
With nettles skirted and with moss o'ergrown,
That tell in homely phrase who lies below ;

Sudden he starts, and hears, or thinks he hears
The sound of something purring at his heels ;
Full fast he flies, and dares not look behind him,
Till out of breath he overtakes his fellows
Who gather round, and wonder at the tale
Of horrid apparition, tall and ghastly,
That walks at dead of night, or takes his stand
O'er some new-opened grave, and strange to tell,
Evanishes at crowing of the cock.

* * * * *

Dull Grave, thou spoilest the dance of youthful
blood,
Strik'st out the dimple from the cheek of mirth
And every smirking feature from the face,
Branding our laughter with the name of madness.
Where are the jesters now ? the men of health,
Complexionally pleasant ? Where's the droll,
Whose every look and gesture was a joke
To clapping theatres and shouting crowds,
And made even thick-lipped musing Melancholy
To gather up her face into a smile
Before she was aware ? Ah ! sullen now,
And dull as the green turf that covers them.
Where are the mighty thunderbolts of war ?
The Roman Cæsars ? and the Grecian chiefs,
The boast of story ? where the hot-brained youth,

Who the tiara at his pleasure tore
From kings of all the then discovered globe,
And cried, forsooth, because his arm was ham-
pered

And had not room enough to do its work ?
Alas ! how slim, dishonourably slim,
And crammed into a space we blush to name,
Proud Royalty ! how altered in thy looks,
How blank thy features, and how wan thy hue.
Son of the Morning, whither art thou gone ?
Where hast thou hid thy many-spangled head,
And the majestic menace of thine eyes,
Felt from afar ? Pliant and powerless now,
Like new-born infant wound up in his swathes,
Or victim tumbled flat upon its back,
That throbs beneath the sacrificer's knife,
Mute must thou bear the strife of little tongues,
And coward insults of the base-born crowd,
That grudge a privilege thou never hadst,
But only hoped for in the peaceful grave,
Of being unmolested and alone.
Arabia's gums and odoriferous drugs,
And honours by the heralds duly paid
In mode and form, even to every scruple,
O cruel irony ! these come too late,
And only mock whom they were meant to honour.

Surely there's not a dungeon slave that's buried
In the highway, unshrouded and uncoffined,
But lies as soft and sleeps as sound as he.
Sorry pre-eminence of high descent
Above the vulgar-born,—to rot in state.

* * * *

Here all the mighty troublers of the earth,
Who swam to sovereign rule through seas of
blood,

The oppressive, sturdy, man-destroying villains,
Who ravaged kingdoms and laid empires waste,
And in a cruel wantonness of power
Thinned states of half their people and gave up
To want the rest, now, like a storm that's spent,
Lie hushed, and meanly sneak behind the covert,
Vain thought! to hide them from the general
scorn,

That haunts and dogs them like an injured ghost,
Implacable. Here too, the petty tyrant,
Whose scant domains geographer ne'er noticed,
And, well for neighbouring grounds, of arm as
short ;

Who fixed his iron talons on the poor,
And griped them like some lordly beast of prey,
Deaf to the forceful cries of gnawing Hunger
And piteous plaintive voice of Misery,

As if a slave was not a shred of Nature,
Of the same common nature with his lord ;
Now, tame and humble, like a child that's
 whipped,
Shakes hands with dust and calls the worm his
 kinsman,
Nor pleads his rank and birthright. Underground
Precedency's a jest ; vassal and lord,
Grossly familiar, side by side consume.

• • • • •

Beauty, thou pretty plaything, dear deceit,
That steals so softly o'er the stripling's heart
And gives it a new pulse unknown before,
The Grave discredits thee ; thy charms ex-
 punged,
Thy roses faded, and thy lilies soiled,
What hast thou more to boast of ? Will thy
 lovers
Flock round thee now to gaze and do thee
 homage ?

• • • • •

Strength too, thou surly and less gentle boast
Of those that loud laugh at the village ring,
A fit of common sickness pulls thee down
With greater ease than e'er thou didst the stripling
That rashly dared thee to the unequal fight.

What groan was that I heard?—deep groan indeed !

With anguish heavy laden ;—let me trace it ;—
From yonder bed it comes, where the strong man,
By stronger arm belaboured, gasps for breath,
Like a hard-hunted beast ; how his great heart
Beats thick, his roomy chest by far too scant
To give the lungs full play, what now avail
The strong-built sinewy limbs and well-spread
shoulders?

See how he tugs for life ! and lays about him
Mad with his pains, eager he catches hold
Of what comes next to hand, and grasps it hard,
Just like a creature drowning ; hideous sight !
O how his eyes stand out and stare full ghastly,
While the distemper's rank and deadly venom
Shoots like a burning arrow 'cross his bowels,
And drinks his marrow up.—Heard you that
groan ?

It was his last. —See how the great Goliath,
Just like a child that brawled itself to rest,
Lies still.

* * * *

With study pale, and midnight vigils spent,
The star-surveying sage close to his eye
Applies the sight-invigorating tube,

And travelling 'through the boundless length of
space

Marks well the courses of the far-seen orbs,
That roll with regular confusion there,
In ecstasy of thought. But ah ! proud man,
Great heights are hazardous to the weak head ;
Soon, very soon, thy firmest footing fails,
And down thou dropp'st into the darksome place,
Where no device nor knowledge ever came.
Here the tongue-warrior lies disabled now,
Disarmed, dishonoured, like a wretch that's
gagged

And cannot tell his ails to passers-by ;
Great man of language ! whence this mighty
change,

This dumb despair and drooping of the head ?
Though strong persuasion hung upon thy lip,
And sly insinuation's softer arts
In ambush lay about thy flowing tongue,
Alas ! how chop-fallen now. Thick mists and
silence

Rest like a weary cloud upon thy breast,
Unceasing. Ah ! where is the lifted arm,
The strength of action, and the force of words,
The well-turned period, and the well-tuned voice,
With all the lesser ornaments of phrase ?

Ah ! fled for ever, as they ne'er had been ;
Razed from the book of Fame ; or, more pro-
voking,

Perchance some hackney hunger-bitten scribbler
Insults thy memory and blots thy tomb
With long flat narrative, or duller rhymes
With heavy halting pace that drawl along,
Enough to rouse a dead man into rage
And warm with red resentment the wan cheek.
Here the great masters of the healing art,
These mighty mock-defrauders of the tomb,
Spite of their juleps and catholicons,
Resign to fate. Proud Æsculapius' son,
Where are thy boasted implements of art,
And all thy well-crammed magazines of health ?
Nor hill nor vale, as far as ship could go,
Nor margin of the gravel-bottomed brook
Escaped thy rifling hand ; from stubborn shrubs,
Thou wrung'st their shy retiring virtues out,
And vexed them in the fire ; nor fly, nor insect,
Nor writhy snake escaped thy deep research ;
But why this apparatus ? why this cost ?
Tell us, thou doughty keeper from the grave,
Where are thy recipes and cordials now,
With the long list of vouchers for thy cures ?
Alas ! thou speakest not,—the bold impostor

Looks not more silly when the cheat's found out.
Here the lank-sided miser, worst of felons,
Who meanly stole (discreditable shift)
From back and belly too, their proper cheer,
Eased of a task it irked the wretch to pay
To his own carcase, now lies cheaply lodged,
By clamorous appetites no longer teased,
Nor tedious bills of charges and repairs ;
But ah ! where are his rents, his comings in ?
Ay, now you've made the rich man poor indeed ;
Robbed of his gods, what has he left behind ?
O cursed lust of gold ! when for thy sake
The fool throws up his interest in *both* worlds,
First starved in this, then damned in that to come.

• • • • •
Tell us, ye dead, will none of you, in pity
To those you left behind, disclose the secret,
(O that some courteous ghost would blab it out),
What 'tis you are, and we must shortly be !
I've heard that souls departed have sometimes
Forewarned men of their death. 'Twas kindly
done

To knock and give the alarum ; but what means
This stinted charity ? tis but lame kindness
That does its work by halves ; why might you not
Tell us what 'tis to die ? do the strict laws

Of your society forbid your speaking
Upon a point so nice ? I'll ask no more ;
Sullen, like lamps in sepulchres, your shine
Enlightens but yourselves. Well, 'tis no matter,
A very little time will clear up all,
And make us learned as you are and as close.
Death's shafts fly thick ; here falls the village
 swain,
And there his pampered lord. The cup goes
 round,
And who so artful as to put it by ?
'Tis long since Death had the majority ;
Yet strange ! the living lay it not to heart ;
See yonder maker of the deadman's bed,
The sexton, hoary-headed chronicle,
Of hard unmeaning face, down which ne'er stole
A gentle tear, with mattock in his hand,
Digs through whole rows of kindred and acquaint-
 ance
By far his juniors ; scarce a skull's cast up,
But well he knew its owner, and can tell
Some passage of his life ; thus hand in hand
The sot has walked with death twice twenty
 years ;
And yet ne'er younker on the green laughs
 louder,

Or clubs a smuttier tale ; when drunkards meet
None sings a merrier catch, or lends a hand
More willing to his cup : poor wretch ! he minds
not,

That soon some trusty brother of the trade
Shall do for him what he has done for thou-
sands.

On this side and on that men see their friends
Drop off like leaves in autumn, yet launch out
Into fantastic schemes, which the long livers
In the world's hale and undegenerate days
Could scarce have leisure for. Fools that we are,
Never to think of death and of ourselves
At the same time, as if to learn to die
Were no concern of ours ; O more than sottish,
For creatures of a day, in gamesome mood,
To frolic on Eternity's dread brink,
Unapprehensive, when for aught we know,
The very first swollen surge shall sweep us in ;
Think we or think we not, time hurries on
With a resistless unremitting stream,
Yet treads more soft than e'er did midnight thief,
That slides his hand under the miser's pillow,
And carries off his prize. What is this world ?
What but a spacious burial-field unwall'd,
Strew'd with Death's spoils, the spoils of animals

Savage and tame, and full of dead men's bones :
The very turf on which we tread once lived,
And we that live must lend our carcasses
To cover our own offspring, in their turns
They too must cover theirs : 'tis here all meet,
The shivering Icelanders and sunburnt Moors,
Men of all climes, that never met before,
And of all creeds, the Jew, the Turk, the Christian ;
Here the proud prince, and favourite yet prouder,
His sovereign's keeper and the people's scourge,
Are huddled out of sight ; here lie abashed
The great negotiators of the Earth,
And celebrated masters of the balance,
Deep read in stratagems and wiles of Courts ;
Now vain their treaty skill, Death scorns to treat :
Here the o'erloaded slave flings down his burden
From his galled shoulders, and when the stern
tyrant,
With all his guards and tools of power about him,
Is meditating new unheard-of hardships,
Mocks his short arm, and quick as thought
escapes
Where tyrants vex not and the weary rest.
Here the warm lover, leaving the cool shade,
The tell-tale echo and the babbling stream,
Time out of mind the favourite seats of love,

Fast by his gentle mistress lays him down
Unblasted by foul tongues. Here friends and foes
Lie close, unmindful of their former feuds.
The lawn-robed prelate, and plain presbyter,
Ere-while that stood aloof, as shy to meet,
Familiar mingle here like sister streams
That some huge interposing rock had split.
Here is the large-limbed peasant, here the child
Of a span long, that never saw the sun,
Nor pressed the nipple, strangled in life's porch ;
Here is the mother, with her sons and daughters,
The barren wife, and long-demurring maid,
Whose lonely unappropriated sweets
Smiled like yon knot of cowslips on the cliff,
Not to be come at by the willing hand ;
Here are the prude severe, and gay coquet,
The sober widow, and the young green virgin
Cropped like a rose before 'tis fully blown,
Or half its worth disclosed. Strange medley here.
Here garrulous old age winds up his tale,
And jovial youth, of lightsome vacant heart,
Whose every day was made of melody,
Hears not the voice of mirth ; the shrill-tongued
shrew,
Meek as the turtle-dove, forgets her chiding ;
Here are the wise, the generous, and the brave,

Now fare ye well, my ain Jean,
This world's care is vain, Jean,
We'll meet and aye be fain
In the land o' the leal.

(Lady Nairn.)

ODE, 1746.

HOW sleep the Brave, who sink to rest
By all their Country's wishes blest?
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung ;
There Honour comes, a pilgrim grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay,
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell a weeping hermit there.

(*Collins.*)

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY
CHURCHYARD.

HE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the
lea,

The ploughman homewards plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds.

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl doth to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly
bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall
burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care,
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke,
How jocund did they drive their team afield,
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure ;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave
Await alike the inevitable hour,
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, to these impute the fault
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted
vault

The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust ?
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death ?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire,
Hands that the rod of empire might have
swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre ;

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll ;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear ;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute, inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade ; nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined,
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray ;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial, still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture
 decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered
 Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply,
And many a holy text around she strews
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing, anxious being, e'er resigned?
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires,
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

• • • • •

(Gray.)

ON A YEARLY BILL OF MORTALITY,
NORTHAMPTON, 1787.



WHILE thirteen moons saw smoothly
run
The Nen's barge-laden wave,
All these, life's rambling journey done,
Have found their home the grave.

Was man, frail always, made more frail
Than in foregoing years ?
Did famine, or did plague prevail,
That so much death appears ?

No ; these were vigorous as their sires,
Nor plague nor famine came ;
This annual tribute Death requires,
And never waives his claim.

Like crowded forest-trees we stand,
And some are marked to fall ;
The axe will smite at God's command,
And soon will smite us all.

Green as the bay-tree, ever green,
With its new foliage on,
The gay, the thoughtless have I seen
I passed—and they were gone.

Read, ye that run, the awful truth
With which I charge my page ;
A worm is in the bud of youth,
And at the root of age.

No present health can health ensure
For yet an hour to come ;
No medicine, though it oft can cure,
Can always baulk the tomb.

* * * * *

(*Cowper.*)

ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT RIDDEL,
OF GLEN RIDDEL, 1794.



O more, ye warblers of the wood, no more,
Nor pour your descant, grating, on my
soul ;

Thou young-eyed Spring, gay in thy verdant stole,
More welcome were to me grim Winter's wildest
roar.

How can ye charm, ye flowers with all your dyes ?
Ye blow upon the sod that wraps my friend ;
How can I to the tuneful strain attend ?
That strain flows round the untimely tomb where
Riddel lies.

Yes, pour, ye warblers, pour the notes of woe,
And soothe the Virtues weeping on this bier ;
The Man of Worth, and has not left his peer,
Is in his narrow house for ever darkly low.

Thee, Spring, again with joy shall others greet,
Me, memory of my loss will only meet.

(Burns.)

TO MARY IN HEAVEN.



THOU lingering star, with lessening ray,
That lovest to greet the early morn,
Again thou usherest in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary ! dear departed shade,
Where is thy place of blissful rest ?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid ?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast ?

That sacred hour can I forget,
Can I forget the hallowed grove
Where, by the winding Ayr, we met
To live one day of parting love.
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past,
Thy image at our last embrace ;
Ah ! little thought we 'twas our last.

Ayr gurgling kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild wood's thickening green ;
The fragrant birch and hawthorn hoar
Twined amorous round the raptured scene ;

The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray,
Till too, too soon the glowing west
Proclaimed the speed of wingèd day.

Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care ;
Time but the impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary, dear departed shade,
Where is thy blissful place of rest ?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid ?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast ?
(*Burns.*)

LIFE.



LIFE, I know not what thou art,
But know that thou and I must part ;
And when, or how, or where we met,
I own to me's a secret yet.
Life, we have been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather ;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear—
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear,—
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time,
Say not good night,—but, in some brighter clime,
Bid me good morning.

(*Mrs. Barbauld.*)

ELEGIAC POEMS.
NINETEENTH CENTURY.





THE DEAD FRIEND.

NOT to the grave, not to the grave,
my Soul,
Descend to contemplate
The form that once was dear.
The Spirit is not there
Which kindled that dead eye,
Which throbbed in that cold heart,
Which in that motionless hand
Hath met thy friendly grasp.
The Spirit is not there,
It is but lifeless, perishable flesh
That moulders in the grave ;
Earth, air, and water's ministering particles
Now to the elements
Resolved, their uses done.
Not to the grave, not to the grave, my Soul,
Follow thy friend beloved,
The Spirit is not there.

Often together have we talked of death ;
How sweet it were to see
All doubtful things made clear ;
How sweet it were with powers
Such as the Cherubim,
To view the depth of Heaven.
Oh, Edmund ! thou hast first,
Begun the travel of Eternity.
I look upon the stars,
And think that thou art there,
Unfettered as the thought that follows thee.

And we have often said how sweet it were
With unseen ministry of angel power
To watch the friends we loved.
Edmund, we did not err.
Sure I have felt thy presence. Thou hast given
A birth to holy thought,
Hast kept me from the world unstained and
pure.

Edmund, we did not err.
Our best affections here,
They are not like the toys of infancy ;
The Soul outgrows them not ;
We do not cast them off ;
Oh, if it could be so,
It were indeed a dreadful thing to die.

Not to the grave, not to the grave, my Soul,
Follow thy friend beloved ;
But in the lonely hour,
But in the evening walk,
Think that he companies thy solitude ;
Think that he holds with thee
Mysterious intercourse ;
And, though remembrance wake a tear,
There will be joy in grief.

(*Southey.*)

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE.

NOT a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corpse to the rampart we hurried ;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell
shot

O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly, at dead of night,
The sod with our bayonets turning,
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Nor in sheet nor in shroud we wound him,
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow,
But we steadfastly gazed on the face of the dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed,
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,

That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his
head,
And we far away on the billow.

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,
But little he'll reck, if they'll let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for retiring,
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory ;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.

(*Wolfe.*)

THE GRAVES OF A HOUSEHOLD.



HEY grew in beauty side by side,
They filled one home with glee,
Their graves are severed far and wide,
By mount, and stream, and sea.
The same fond mother bent at night
O'er each fair sleeping brow,
She had each folded flower in sight—
Where are those dreamers now ?

One midst the forests of the West
By a dark stream is laid,
The Indian knows his place of rest,
Far in the cedar shade.
The sea, the blue lone sea hath one,
He lies where pearls lie deep,
He was the loved of all, yet none
O'er his low bed may weep.

One sleeps where southern vines are dressed
Above the noble slain ;
He wrapt his colours round his breast
On a blood-red field of Spain.

And one,—o'er her the myrtle showers
Its leaves, by soft winds fanned ;
She faded midst Italian flowers,
The last of that bright band.

And parted thus they rest who played
Beneath the same green tree,
Whose voices mingled as they prayed
Around one parent knee ;
They that with smiles lit up the hall,
And cheered with song the hearth ;—
Alas for love ! if thou wert all,
And nought beyond, oh Earth.

(*Mrs. Hemans.*)

ON AN INFANT DEAD AS SOON AS
BORN.

SAW where in the shroud did lurk
A curious frame of Nature's work ;
A floweret crushèd in the bud,
A nameless piece of Babyhood
Was in her cradle-coffin lying ;
Extinct, with scarce the sense of dying ;
So soon to exchange the imprisoning womb
For darker closets of the tomb.
She did but ope an eye, and put
A clear beam forth, then straight up shut
For the long dark, ne'er more to see
Through glasses of mortality.
Riddle of destiny, who can show
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below ?
Shall we say that Nature, blind,
Checked her hand, and changed her mind,
Just when she had exactly wrought
A finished pattern without fault ?

Could she flag ? or could she tire ?
Or lacked she the Promethean fire
(With her nine moons long workings sickened)
That should thy little limbs have quickened ?
Limbs so firm, they seemed to assure
Life of health and days mature ;
Woman's self in miniature.
Limbs so fair, they might supply
(Themselves now but cold imagery)
The sculptor, to make Beauty by.
Or, did the stern-eyed Fate descry
That, babe or mother, one must die ;
So in mercy left the stock,
And cut the branch ; to save the shock
Of young years widowed, and the pain
When single state comes back again
To the lone man who, reft of wife,
Thenceforward drags a maimed life ?
The economy of Heaven is dark,
And wisest clerks have missed the mark,
Why human buds, like this, should fall
More brief than fly ephemeral
That has his day ; while shrivelled crones
Stiffen with age to stocks and stones,
And crabbed use the conscience sears
In sinners of a hundred years.

Mother's prattle, mother's kiss,
Baby fond, thou ne'er wilt miss,
Rites which custom does impose,
Silver bells and baby clothes,
Coral redder than those lips
Which pale death did late eclipse,
Music framed for infant's glee,
Whistle never tuned for thee,
Though thou want'st not, thou shalt have them,
Loving hearts were they which gave them.
Let not one be missing, nurse,
See them laid upon the hearse
Of infant slain by doom perverse ;
Why should kings and nobles have
Pictured trophies to their grave,
And we, churls, to thee deny
Thy pretty toys with thee to lie,
A more harmless vanity.

(*Lamb.*)

DIRGE.



ASTED, weary, wherefore stay
Wrestling thus with earth and clay?
From the body pass away,
Hark, the mass is singing;
From thee doff thy mortal weed,
Mary mother be thy speed,
Saints to help thee at thy need,
Hark, the knell is ringing.

Fear not snow-drift driving fast,
Sleet, or hail, or levin blast;
Soon the shroud shall lap thee fast,
And the sleep be on thee cast
That shall ne'er know waking.
Haste thee, haste thee to be gone,
Earth flits fast and time draws on,
Gasp thy gasp and groan thy groan,
Day is near the breaking.

(*Scott.*)



HERE shall the lover rest,
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast,
Parted for ever ?
Where through groves deep and high
Sounds the far billow,
Where early violets die,
Under the willow.
Eleu loro,
Soft shall be his pillow.

There through the summer day
Cool streams are laving,
There, while the tempests sway,
Scarce are boughs waving ;
There thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted for ever,
Never again to wake,
Never, O never.
Eleu loro,
Never, O never.

(Sir Walter Scott.)

SOLDIER, rest ; thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not break-
ing,


Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy streams of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest ; thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armour's clang, or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
At the daybreak from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.

Ruder sounds shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans or squadrons tramping.

(*Scott.*)

TIME.

“HY sitt'st thou by that ruined hall,
Thou aged carle, so stern and grey?
Dost thou its former pride recall,
Or ponder how it passed away?”

“Know'st thou not me?” the Deep Voice cried,
“So long enjoyed, so oft misused;
Alternate, in thy fickle pride,
Desired, neglected, and accused.

“Before my breath, like blazing flax
Man and his marvels pass away;
And changing empires wane and wax,
Are founded, flourish, and decay.

“Redeem mine hours,—the space is brief,—
While in my glass the sand-grains shiver,
And measureless thy joy or grief
When Time and thou shalt part for ever.”

(*Scott.*)

TOM BOWLING.



HERE, a sheer hulk, lies poor Tom
Bowling,
The darling of our crew ;
No more he'll hear the tempest howling,
For death has broached him to.
His form was of the manliest beauty,
His heart was kind and soft,
Faithful, below he did his duty,
But now he's gone aloft.

* * * * *

Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,
When He who all commands
Shall give, to call Life's crew together,
The word to pipe all hands.
Thus Death, who kings and tars despatches,
In vain Tom's life has doffed,
For though his body's under hatches
His soul has gone aloft.

(*Dibdin.*)

THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.



VOYAGE at sea and all its strife,
Its pleasure and its pain,
At every point resembles life,—

Hard work for little gain.
The anchor's weighed, smooth is the flood,
Serene seems every form,
But soon, alas ! comes on the scud
That speaks the threatening storm :
The towering masts in splinters shivering,
The useless sails in tatters quivering,
Thunder rolling, lightning flashing,
Waves in horrid tumult dashing
Foam along the dreary shore :
Still, while tars sit round so jolly,
The sprightly flute calls care a folly,
Aloft, alow, afloat, aground,
Let but the smiling grog go round,
And storms are heard no more.

The voyage through life is various found,
The wind is seldom fair,
Though to the straits of pleasure bound,
Too oft we touch at care.

Impervious dangers we explore ;
False friends, some faithless she,
Pirates, and sharks, are found ashore
As often as at sea.
A lowering storm from envy brewing
Shall at a distance menace ruin ;
While slander, malice, and detraction
A host of fiends shall bring in action,
And plant care's thorns at every pore.
Yet, roused to sweet domestic duty,
Some manly imp, or infant beauty
Clings round his neck or climbs his knees,—
Each thorn's plucked out, pain's turned to
ease,
And storms are heard no more.

The ship towers gaily on the main,
To fight in country's cause,
And bid the obedient world maintain
Its honours and its laws ;
Nor from surrounding danger shrinks
Till, sacrifice to fame,
Death dealing round, she nobly sinks,
Only to live in name.
And so the man,—his ample measure
Filled with alternate pain and pleasure ;

Till, long in age and honour living,
Life's strength worn out, a lesson giving
To those he leaves his well-got store,
Mild hope and resignation greeting,
The playful soul, in circles fleeting,
Makes onward to its native skies ;
While gasping nature pants and dies,
And storms are heard no more.

(*Dibdin.*)

SOLDIER'S FUNERAL.



THE martial pomp, the mournful train,
Bespeak some honoured hero slain ;
These obsequies denote him brave ;

Hark ! the volley o'er his grave ;
The awful knell sounds low and lorn,
Yet cease, ye kindred brave, to mourn ;

Nor deem it hard, ye thoughtless gay,
Short is man's longest earthly stay ;
Our little hour of life we try,
And then depart ; we're born to die ;
Then lose no moment dear to fame,
They longest live who live in name.

The plaintive fife and muffled drum
The *man* may summon to his silent home ;
The SOLDIER lives ;—his deeds to trace,
Behold the seraph Glory place
An ever-living laurel round his sacred tomb.

(*Dibdin.*)

ADONAIIS.

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS.

THE WEEP for Adonais—he is dead !Oh ! weep for Adonais, though our
tears

Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head !
And thou, sad hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow ! Say : “ With
me

Died Adonais ! Till the future dares
Forget the past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity.”

Where wert thou, mighty mother, when he lay,
When thy son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies
In darkness ? Where was lorn Urania
When Adonais died ? With veiled eyes,
'Mid listening echoes, in her paradise
She sate, while one with soft enamoured breath
Rekindled all the feeding melodies

With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of
Death.

Oh ! weep for Adonais—he is dead !
Wake, melancholy mother, wake and weep !
Yet wherefore ? Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep,
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep ;
For he is gone where all things wise and fair
Descend. Oh ! dream not that the amorous deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air ;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our
despair.

Most musical of mourners, weep again
Lament anew, Urania ! He died
Who was the sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide
Trampled and mocked with many a loathed rite
Of lust and blood. He went unterrified
Into the gulf of death ; but his clear sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth, the third among the Sons of
Light.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew !
Not all to that bright station dared to climb :
And happier they their happiness who knew,
Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time
In which suns perished. Others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or god,
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime ;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road
Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's
serene abode.

But now thy youngest, dearest one has perished,
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished,
And fed with true-love tears, instead of dew.
Most musical of mourners, weep anew !
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest, and the last,
The bloom whose petals, nipped before they blew,
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste ;
The broken lily lies—the storm is overpassed.

To that high capital, where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came ; and bought, with price of purest breath,
A grave among the eternal. Come away !
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day

Is yet his fitting charnel roof, while still
He lies as if in dewy sleep he lay.
Awake him not ; surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

He will awake no more, oh, never more !
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace
The shadow of white Death, and at the door
Invisible Corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place ;
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface
So fair a prey, till darkness and the law
Of change shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain
draw.

Oh, weep for Adonais ! The quick Dreams,
The passion-wingèd ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was his music, wander not—
Wander no more from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there whence they sprung ; and mourn
their lot
Round the cold heart where, after their sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength or find a home again.

And one with trembling hand clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries,
"Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead !
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some dream has loosened from his brain."
Lost angel of a ruined paradise !
She knew not 'twas her own—as with no stain
She faded like a cloud which had outwept its
rain.

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs, as if embalming them ;
Another clipped her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem ;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and winged reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak,
And dull the barbed fire against his frozen cheek.

Another Splendour on his mouth alit,
That mouth whence it was wont to draw the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music : the damp death

Quenched its caress upon his icy lips ;
And as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapour which the cold night clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed to its
eclipse.

And others came—Desires, and Adorations,
Winged Persuasions, and veiled Destinies,
Splendours, and Glooms, and glittering incarnations
Of Hopes and Fears, and twilight Fantasies ;
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp ; the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

All he had loved, and moulded into thought
From shape and hue and odour and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair, unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the ærial eyes that kindle day ;
Afar the melancholy Thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild Winds flew round, sobbing in their
dismay.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green
 spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day ;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds :—a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen
 hear.

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw
 down
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
Or they dead leaves ; since her delight is flown.
For whom should she have waked the sullen year ?
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear,
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou, Adonais ; wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears,—odour, to sighing
 ruth.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain,

Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee ; the curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest.

Ah, woe is me ! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year.
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone ;
The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear ;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Season's
bier ;
The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
And build their mossy homes in field and brere ;
And the green lizard, and the golden snake,
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance
awake.

Through wood and stream and field and hill and
ocean
A quickening life from the Earth's heart has burst,
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world, when first
God dawned on chaos. In its stream immersed,

The lamps of heaven flash with a softer light ;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst,
Diffuse themselves, and spend in love's delight
The beauty and the joy of their renewed might.

The leprous corpse, touched by this spirit tender,
Enhales itself in flowers of gentle breath ;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death,
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath.
Nought we know dies : shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning ? The intense atom glows
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.

Alas ! that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal ! Woe is me !
Whence are we ? and why are we ? of what scene
The actors or spectators ? Great and mean
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must
borrow.

As long as skies are blue and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year
to sorrow.

He will awake no more, oh never more !
"Wake thou," cried Misery, "childless Mother, rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake in thy heart's core
A wound more fierce than his, with tears and
sighs."

And all the dreams that watched Urania's eyes,
And all the echoes whom their sister's song
Had held in holy silence, cried, "Arise,"
Swift as a thought by the snake Memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendour
sprung.

She rose like an autumnal night that springs
Out of the east, and follows wild and drear
The golden day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Had left the earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear
So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania ;
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist ; so swept her on her way,
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

Out of her secret paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone and
steel,
And human hearts, which, to her airy tread
Yielding not, wounded the invisible

Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell,
And barbed tongues, and thoughts, more sharp
 than they,
Rent the soft form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

In the death chamber for a moment Death,
Shamed by the presence of that living might,
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear de-
 light.

“Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
As silent lightning leaves the starless night,
Leave me not,” cried Urania, her distress
Roused Death ; Death rose, and smiled, and met
 her vain caress.

“Stay yet awhile ! speak to me once again !
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live !
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else survive,
With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais ! I would give

All that I am, to be as thou now art,
But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart.

“O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty
heart

Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
Defenceless as thou wert, oh! where was then
Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?
Or, hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like
deer.

“The herded wolves, bold only to pursue,
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead,
The vultures, to the conqueror's banner true,
Who feed where desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion;—how they fled,
When, like Apollo from his golden brow,
The Pythian of the age one arrow sped,
And smiled! The spoilers tempt no second blow,
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying
low.

“ The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn ;
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again.
So is it in the world of living men ;
A god-like mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven ; and when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit’s awful night.”

Thus ceased she, and the mountain shepherds
came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent,
The Pilgrim of eternity, whose fame,
Over his living head like heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow. From her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from his
tongue.

Midst others of less note came one frail form,
A phantom among men, companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell. He, as I guess,

Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness
Actæon like, and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts along that rugged way
Pursued like raging hounds their father and their
prey.

A pard-like Spirit, beautiful and swift,
A love in desolation masked, a power
Girt round with weakness, it can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour.
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow ; even whilst we speak
Is it not broken ? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly ; on the cheek
The life can burn in blood even while the heart
may break.

His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets white, and pied, and blue ;
And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy tresses grew,
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it. Of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart ;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunters dart.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears. Well knew that gentle
band

Who in another's fate now wept his own.
As in the accents of an unknown land
He sang new sorrow, sad Urania scanned
The stranger's mien, and murmured, "Who art
thou?"

He answered not, but with a sudden hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's—Oh! that it
should be so!

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?
If it be he who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured the departed one,
Let me not vex with inharmonious sighs
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh!
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself disown,

It felt, yet could escape, the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre un-
strung.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame !
Live ! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name !
But be thyself, and know thyself to be !
And even at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow ;
Remorse and self-contempt shall cling to thee,
Hot shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt as now.

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream below.
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead ;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now.
Dust to the dust, but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of
shame.

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not
sleep,

He hath awakened from the dream of life ;
'Tis we who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings. *We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel ; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our
living clay.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night ;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again.
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain ;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

He lives, he wakes,—'tis Death is dead, not he ;
Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone !

Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan !
Cease ye faint flowers and fountains ! And thou Air
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its
despair !

He is made one with Nature. There is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird.
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone ;
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own,
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely. He doth bear
His part, while the One Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling
there

All new successions to the forms they wear,
Torturing the unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear,
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the heaven's light.

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not ;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb,
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there,
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy
air.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal
thought
Far in the unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale, his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him ; Sidney, as he fought,
And as he fell, and as he lived and loved,
Sublimely mild, a spirit without spot,
Arose ; and Lucan, by his death approved ;—
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

And many more whose names on earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rosed, robed in dazzling immortality,

"Thou art become as one of us," they cry,
"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid a heaven of song ;
Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper of our
throng."

Who mourns for Adonais ? Oh ! come forth,
Fond wretch, and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous earth ;
As from a centre dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Sate the void circumference ; then shrink
Even to a point within one day and night ;
And keep thy heart light, lest it make thee sink,
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to
the brink.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
Oh not of him, but of our joy. 'Tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions, there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought ;
For such as he can lend—they borrow not
Glory from those who made the world their prey ;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

Go thou to Rome,—at once the paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness ;
And where its wrecks like shattered mountains
 rise,
And flowering weeds and fragrant copses dress
The bones of Desolation's nakedness,
Pass, till the spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is
 spread.

And grey walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds like slow fire upon a hoary brand ;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble ; and beneath
A field is spread on which a newer band
Have pitched in heaven's smile their camp of death
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished
 breath.

Here pause. These graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each ; and if the seal is set
Here on one fountain of a mourning mind,

Break it not thou ! too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become.

The One remains, the many change and pass ;
Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows
fly ;

Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek ;
Follow where all is fled, — Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music,—words are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.


Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my heart ?
Thy hopes are gone before ; from all things here
They have departed ; thou shouldst now depart ;
A light is passed from the revolving year,
And man and woman ; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles, the low wind whispers near ;
'Tis Adonais calls. Oh ! hasten thither !
No more let life divide what death can join together.

That light whose smile kindles the universe,
That beauty in which all things work and move,
That benediction which the eclipsing curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining love
Which, through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me ; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given.
The massy earth and sphered skies are riven !
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar !
Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the eternal are.

(Shelley.)

DEATH.

EATH is here, and death is there,
Death is busy everywhere ;
All around, within, beneath,
Above is death—and we are death.

Death has set his mark and seal
On all we are and all we feel,
On all we know and all we fear,

* * * * *

First our pleasures die, and then
Our hopes, and then our fears, and when
These are dead, the debt is due,
Dust claims dust,—and we die too.

All things that we love and cherish,
Like ourselves, must fade and perish,
Such is our rude mortal lot ;
Love itself would, did they not.

(*Shelley.*)

•

DEATH.



THEY die ; the dead return not. Misery
Sits near an open grave, and calls them
over,

A youth with hoary hair and haggard eye.
They are the names of kindred, friend, and lover,
Which he so feebly calls. They all are gone,
Fond wretch, all dead ! Those vacant names
alone,
This most familiar scene, my pain,
These tombs—alone remain.

Misery, my sweetest friend, oh ! weep no more !
Thou wilt not be consoled ? I wonder not ;
For I have seen thee from thy dwelling's door
Watch the calm sunset with them, and this spot
Was even as bright and calm, but transitory,—
And now thy hopes are gone, thy hair is hoary,
This most familiar scene, my pain,
These tombs,—alone remain.

(*Shelley.*)

ON DEATH.

THE pale, the cold, and the moony smile
Which the meteor beam of a starless
night

Sheds on a lonely and seagirt isle
Ere the dawning of morn's undoubted light,
Is the flame of life so fickle and wan
That flits round our steps till their strength is gone.

O man ! hold thee on in courage of soul
Through the stormy shades of thy worldly way ;
And the billows of cloud that around thee roll
Shall sleep in the light of a wondrous day,
Where hell and heaven shall leave thee free
To the universe of destiny.

This world is the nurse of all we know,
This world is the mother of all we feel ;
And the coming of death is a fearful blow
To a brain unencompassed with nerves of steel ;
When all that we know or feel or see
Shall press like an unreal mystery.

The secret things of the grave are there
Where all but this frame must surely be,
Though the fine-wrought eye and the wondrous
ear

No longer will live to hear or to see
All that is great and all that is strange
In the boundless realm of unending change.

Who telleth a tale of unspeaking death?
Who lifteth the veil of what is to come?
Who painteth the shadows that are beneath
The wide-winding caves of the peopled tomb?
Or uniteth the hopes of what shall be
With the fears and the love for that which we see?

(*Shelley.*)

THANATOS.



! WHO would cherish life,
And cling unto this heavy clog of
clay ;
Love this rude world of strife
Where glooms and tempests cloud the fairest
day,
And where, 'neath outward smiles
Concealed, the snake lies feeding on its prey,
Where pitfalls lie in every flowery way,
And syrens lure the wanderer to their wiles.
Hateful it is to me,
Its riotous railings and revengeful strife ;
I'm tired with all its screams and brutal shouts
Dinning the ear ;—away—away with life,
And welcome, O thou silent maid,
Who in some foggy vault art laid,
Where never daylight's dazzling ray
Comes to disturb thy dismal sway ;
And there amidst unwholesome damps dost
sleep
In such forgetful slumbers deep,

That all thy senses stupefied
Are to marble petrified.
Sleepy Death, I welcome thee,
Sweet are thy calms to misery ;
Poppies I will ask no more,
Nor the fatal hellebore ;
Death is the best, the only cure,
His are slumbers ever sure.
Lay me in the Gothic tomb,
In whose solemn fretted gloom
I may lie in mouldering state,
With all the grandeur of the great.
Over me, magnificent,
Carve a stately monument ;
Then thereon my statue lay,
With hands in attitude to pray ;
And angels serve to hold my head,
Weeping o'er the father dead.
Duly too, at close of day,
Let the pealing organ play ;
And while the harmonious thunders roll,
Chant a vesper to my soul :
Thus how sweet my sleep will be,
Shut out from thoughtful misery.

(*H. Kirke White.*)

ATHANATOS.



WAY with Death,—away
With all her sluggish sleeps and
chilling damps
Impervious to the day,
Where nature sinks into inanity.
How can the soul desire
Such hateful nothingness to crave,
And yield with joy the vital fire
To moulder in the grave ?
Yet mortal life is sad,
Eternal storms molest its sullen sky,
And sorrows ever rife
Drain the sacred fountain dry ;—
Away with mortal life.
But hail the calm reality,
The seraph Immortality ;
Hail the Heavenly bowers of peace
Where all the storms of passion cease ;
Wild Life's dismaying struggle o'er,
The wearied spirit weeps no more,
But wears the eternal smile of joy,
Tasting bliss without alloy.

Welcome, welcome happy bowers,
Where no passing tempest lowers,
But the azure heavens display
The everlasting smile of day,
Where the choral seraph choir
Strike to praise the harmonious lyre,
And the spirit sinks to ease
Lulled by distant symphonies :
O to think of meeting there
The friends whose graves received our tear,
The daughter loved, the wife adored,
To our widowed arms restored,
And all the joys which death did sever
Given to us again for ever.
Who would cling to wretched life,
And hug the poisoned thorn of strife,
Who would not long from earth to fly,
A senseless, sluggish lump to lie,
When the glorious prospect lies
Full before his raptured eyes ?

(H. Kirke White.)

STANZAS.



AND thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth ;
And form so soft, and charms so rare,
Too soon returned to earth !
Though Earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low,
Nor gaze upon the spot ;
There flowers and weeds at will may grow,
So I behold them not :
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved, and long must love,
Like common earth can rot ;
To me there needs no stone to tell
'Tis nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last
As fervently as thou,
Who didst not change through all the past,
And canst not alter now.

The love where death has set his seal
No age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow ;
And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Of wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours,
The worst can but be mine,
The sun that cheers, the storm that lours,
Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep ;
Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have passed away,
I might have watched through long decay.

The flower in ripened bloom unmatched,
Must fall the earliest prey,
Though by no hand untimely snatched,
The leaves must drop away ;
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering leaf by leaf,
Than see it plucked to-day,
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne
To see thy beauties fade ;
The night that followed such a morn
Had worn a deeper shade ;
Thy day without a cloud hath past,
And thou wert lovely to the last,
Extinguished, not decayed,
As stars that shoot along the sky,
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
My tears might well be shed
To think I was not near to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed ;
To gaze, how fondly, on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace,
Uphold thy drooping head ;
And show that love, however vain,
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
Though thou hast left me free,
The loveliest things that still remain,
Than thus remember thee.
The all of thine that cannot die

Through dark and dread eternity
Returns again to me,
And more thy buried love endears
Than aught, except its living years.

(Byron.)

ON THYRZA.



NE struggle more, and I am free
From pangs that rend my heart in
twain,

One last long sigh to love and thee,

Then back to busy life again.

It suits me well to mingle now

With things that never pleased before ;

Though every joy is fled below,

What future grief can touch me more ?

Then bring me wine, the banquet bring,

Man was not formed to live alone ;

I'll be that light unmeaning thing

That smiles with all and weeps with none.

It was not thus in days more dear,

It never would have been, but thou

Hast fled and left *me* lonely here,

Thou art nothing, all are nothing now.

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe !

The smile that sorrow fain would wear

But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,

Like roses o'er a sepulchre.

Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel awhile the sense of ill,
Though pleasure fires the maddening soul,
The heart—the heart is lonely still.

On many a lone and lovely night
It soothed to gaze upon the sky,
For then I deemed the heavenly light
Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye ;
And oft I thought, at Cynthia's noon,
When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,
"Now Thyrsa gazes on that moon,"—
Alas ! it gleamed upon her grave.

When stretched on fever's sleepless bed,
And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,
" 'Tis comfort still," I faintly said,
"That Thyrsa cannot know my pains :"
Like freedom to the time-worn slave,
A boon 'tis idle then to give,
Relenting Nature vainly gave
My life, when Thyrsa ceased to live.

My Thyrsa's pledge in better days,
When love and life alike were new,
How different now thou meet'st my gaze,
How tinged by time with sorrow's hue !

The heart that gave itself with thee
Is silent—ah ! were mine as still,
Though cold as even the dead can be,
It feels, it sickens with the chill.

Thou bitter pledge, thou mournful token,
Though painful, welcome to my breast ;
Still, still preserve that love unbroken,
Or break the heart to which thou art pressed.
Time tempers love, but not removes,
More hallowed when its hope is fled,
Oh ! what are thousand living loves
To that which cannot quit the dead ?

(*Byron.*)

EUTHANASIA.



WHEN time, or soon or late, shall
bring
The dreamless sleep that lulls the
dead,
Oblivion, may thy languid wing
Wave gently o'er my dying bed.

No band of friends or heirs be there
To weep or wish the coming blow ;
No maiden, with dishevelled hair,
To feel or feign decorous woe.

But silent let me sink to earth,
With no officious mourners near ;
I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a fear.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
Could nobly check its useless sighs,
Might then exert its latest power
In her who lives and him who dies.

'Twere sweet, my Psyche, to the last
Thy features still serene to see ;
Forgetful of its struggles past,
Even pain itself should smile on thee.

But vain the wish,—for Beauty still
Will shrink as shrinks the ebbing breath ;
And woman's tears produced at will
Deceive in life, unman in death.

Then lonely be my latest hour,
Without regret, without a groan,
For thousands death hath ceased to lour,
And pain been transient or unknown.

" Ay, but to die, and go," alas !
Where all have gone, and all must go ;
To be the nothing that I was
Ere born to life and living woe.

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be.

(*Byron.*)



FT in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound
me,

Fond Memory brings the light
Of other days around me ;
The smiles, the tears
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken,
The eyes that shone,
Now dimmed and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken.
Thus in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When I remember all
The friends so linked together,
I've seen around me fall
Like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one
Who treads alone

Some banquet hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed.
Thus in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

(*Moore.*)




WEEP not for those whom the veil of the
tomb,
In life's happy morning, hath hid from
our eyes,
Ere sin threw a blight o'er the spirit's young
bloom,
Or earth had profaned what was born for the skies.
Death chilled the fair fountain ere sorrow had
stained it,
T'was frozen in all the pure light of its course,
And but sleeps till the sunshine of Heaven has
unchained it,
To water that Eden where first was its source.

Mourn not for her, the young bride of the vale,
Our gayest and loveliest, lost to us now,
Ere life's early lustre had time to grow pale,
And the garland of love was yet fresh on her
brow.
Oh then was her moment, dear spirit, for flying
From this gloomy world, while its gloom was
unknown,

And the wild hymns she warbled so sweetly in
dying,
Were echoed in Heaven by lips like her own.
Weep not for her—in her spring-time she flew
To that land where the wings of the soul are unfurled ;
And now, like a star beyond evening's cold dew,
Looks radiantly down on the tears of this world.


(*Moore.*)

 HIS world is all a fleeting show,
For man's illusion given ;
The smiles of joy, the tears of woe,
Deceitful shine, deceitful flow—
There's nothing true, but Heaven.

And false the light on glory's plume
As fading hues of even ;
And love and hope and beauty's bloom
Are blossoms gathered for the tomb—
There's nothing bright, but Heaven.

Poor wanderers of a stormy day,
From wave to wave we're driven,
And fancy's flash and reason's ray
Serve but to light the troubled way—
There's nothing calm, but Heaven.

(Moore.)

OW sweetly could I lay my head
Within the cold grave's silent breast,
Where sorrow's tears no more are
shed,

No more the ills of life molest.
For ah ! my heart, how very soon
The glittering dreams of youth are past,
And long before it reach its noon
The sun of life is overcast.

(*Moore.*)



HREE years she grew in sun and
shower,

Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown ;
This child I to myself will take ;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse ; and with me,
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth, in heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm,
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ;
Nor shall she fail to see,

Even in the motions of the storm,
Grace, that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place,
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

"And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake,—the work was done,—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene,
The memory of what has been
And never more will be.

(*Wordsworth.*)

ON THE DEATH OF JAMES HOGG.



WHEN first, descending from the moor-
lands,

I saw the stream of Yarrow glide
Along a bare and open valley,
The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.

When last along its banks I wandered,
Through groves that had begun to shed
Their golden leaves upon the pathways,
My steps the Border-minstrel led.

The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,
'Mid mouldering ruins low he lies ;
And death, upon the Braes of Yarrow,
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes.

Nor has the rolling year twice measured
From sign to sign its steadfast course,
Since every mortal power of Coleridge,
Was frozen at its marvellous source ;

The rapt one of the god-like forehead,
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth ;
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

Like clouds that rake the mountain summits,
Or waves that own no curbing hand,
How fast has brother followed brother
From sunshine to the sunless land !

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber
Were earlier raised, remain to hear
A timid voice that asks in whispers,
"Who next will drop and disappear?"

Our haughty life is crowned with darkness
Like London with its own black wreath,
On which, with thee, O Crabbe, forth looking,
I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed
Those two are gone before, but why,
O'er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered,
Should frail survivors heave a sigh ?

Mourn rather for that holy spirit,
Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep ;
For Her who ere her summer faded
Has sunk into a breathless sleep.

No more of old romantic sorrows
For slaughtered youth or love-sick maid ;
With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,
And Ettrick mourns with her their poet dead.

(*Wordsworth*, 1835.)

ON MRS. FERMOR.



FOR a dirge ! but why complain ?
Ask rather a triumphal strain
When Fermor's race is run ;
A garland of immortal boughs
To twine around the Christian's brows,
Whose glorious work is done.

We pay a high and holy debt ;
No tears of passionate regret
Shall stain this votive lay ;
Ill-worthy, Beaumont, were the grief
That flings itself on wild relief
When Saints have passed away.

Sad doom, at Sorrow's shrine to kneel,
For ever covetous to feel
And impotent to bear ;
Such once was hers—to think and think
On severed love, and only sink
From anguish to despair.

But nature to its inmost part
Faith had refined ; and to her heart
A peaceful cradle given,

Calm as the dew-drop's, free to rest
Within a breeze-fanned rose's breast
Till it exhales to Heaven.

Was ever spirit that could bend,
So graciously?—that could descend,
Another's need to suit,
So promptly from her lofty throne?—
In works of love, in these alone,
How restless, how minute !

Pale was her hue ; yet mortal cheek
Ne'er kindled with a livelier streak
When aught had suffered wrong,—
When aught that breathes had felt a wound ;
Such look the oppressor might confound,
However proud and strong.

But hushed be every thought that springs
From out the bitterness of things ;
Her quiet is secure ;
No thorns can pierce her tender feet,
Whose life was like the violet sweet,
As climbing jasmine pure—

As snowdrop on an infant's grave,
Or lily heaving with the wave
That feeds it and defends ;

As Vesper, ere the star hath kissed
The mountain-top, or breathed the mist
That from the vale ascends.

Thou takest not away, O Death !
Thou strikest,—absence perisheth,
Indifference is no more ;
The future brightens on our sight ;
For on the past hath fallen a light
That tempts us to adore.

(*Wordsworth.*)

ON MRS. FERMOR.

BY vain affections unenthralled,
Though resolute when duty called
To meet the world's broad eye,
Pure as the holiest cloistered nun
That ever feared the tempting sun,
Did Fermor live and die.

This tablet, hallowed by her name,
One heart-relieving tear may claim ;
But if the pensive gloom
Of fond regret be still thy choice,
Exalt thy spirit, hear the voice
Of Jesus from her tomb.

" I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

(*Wordsworth.*)

LINES

*Written when the death of Mr. Fox was hourly
expected.*



LOUD is the Vale, the voice is up
With which she speaks when storms
are gone,
A mighty unison of streams,
Of all her voices one.

Loud is the Vale ;—this inland depth
In peace is roaring like the sea ;
Yon star upon the mountain-top
Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain depressed,
Importunate and heavy load ;
The Comforter hath found me here,
Upon this lonely road ;

And many thousand now are sad—
Wait the fulfilment of their fear ;
For he must die who is their stay,
Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth
To breathless Nature's dark abyss ;
But when the good and great depart
What is it more than this—

That Man, who is from God sent forth,
Doth yet again to God return?—
Such ebb and flow must ever be,
Then wherefore should we mourn?

(*Wordsworth.*)



TH death ! thou art indeed an awful thing,

Did we believe in all we ought to know ;
 Yet, ever brooding, thine invisible wing
 Casts not a shadow in the vale below ;
 With vernal thyme the turfy hillocks swell,
 Old Fairfield's side is sweet with fragrant larches,
 And the slim lady-birch he loved so well
 With paley verdure decks her graceful arches ;

The lovely things to which he gave a soul,
 Till they became a body to his mind,
 Are what they were before the booming toll
 Declared his corse to hallowed ground con-
 signed.

Yet in one house that stands upon the brow
 One thought of death and of the dead is all,
 Their depth of grief is all their comfort now,
 They pray to God to help their tears to fall.


Sad doth it seem, but nought is truly sad,
 Or only sad that we may better be ;
 We should in very gulfs of grief be glad,
 The great intents of God could we but see ;

Think of the souls that he in heaven will meet,
Some that on earth he knew and loved most dearly,
And whose perfection, at their Saviour's feet,
Without a stain of earth will shine so clearly.

Think too of souls on earth unknown to him
Whom he will know as well as kin or neighbours,
Laborious saints that now with seraphim
Expect the blessed fruit of all their labours.
Think that he is what oft he wished to be,
While yet he was a mortal man on earth,
Then weep, but know that grief's extremity
Contains a hope which never was in mirth.

(Hartley Coleridge.)

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

NE more unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death ;
Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care,
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair.
Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements,
While the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing,
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully,
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly ;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful ;
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still for all slips of hers
One of Eve's family,
Wipe those poor lips of hers,
Oozing so clammily,
Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses
While wonderment guesses,
Where was her home ?

Who was her father ?
Who was her mother ?
Had she a sister ?
Had she a brother ?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other ?

Alas ! for the rarity

Of Christian charity
Under the sun ;
O ! it was pitiful,
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed ;
Love by harsh evidence
Thrown from its eminence ;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver,
But not the dark arch
Nor the black flowing river ;
Mad from life's history,

Glad to death's mystery
Swift to be hurled—
Any where,
Any where
Out of the world

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran,
Over the brink of it,—
Picture it, think of it,
Dissolute man ;
Lave in it, drink of it,
Then, if you can.


Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care,
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair.

Ere her limbs frigidly,
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently, kindly
Smooth and compose them,
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly ;

Dreadfully staring
Through muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest.
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast.
Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour.

(*Hood.*)

E watched her breathing through the
night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro ;

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied—
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

But when the morn came, dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed,—she had
Another morn than ours.

(*Hood.*)



HE bright-haired morn is glowing
O'er emerald meadows gay,
With many a clear gem strowing
The early shepherd's way.
Ye gentle elves, by Fancy seen
Stealing away with light
To slumber in your leafy screen,
Tread more than airy light.

And see what joyous greeting
The sun through heaven has shed,
Though fast yon shower be fleeting,
His beams have faster sped.
For lo ! above the western haze
High towers the rainbow arch
In solid span of purest rays ;
How stately is its march.

Pride of the dewy morning,
The swain's experienced eye
From thee takes timely warning,
Nor trusts the gorgeous sky,

For well he knows, such dawns gay
Bring noons of storm and shower,
And travellers linger on the way
Beside the sheltering bower.

E'en so, in hope and trembling
Should watchful shepherd view
His little lambs assembling,
With glance both kind and true ;
'Tis not the eye of keenest gaze,
Nor the quick-swelling breast
That soonest thrills at touch of praise,—
These do not please him best.

But voices low and gentle,
And timid glances shy
That seem for aid parental
To sue all wistfully,
Still pressing, longing to be right,
Yet fearing to be wrong,
In these the pastor dares delight,
A lamb-like, Christ-like throng.

These in Life's distant even
Shall shine serenely bright,
As in the autumnal heaven
Mild rainbow tints at night,

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When the last shower is stealing down,
And ere they sink to rest
The sunbeams weave a parting crown
For some sweet woodland nest.

The promise of the morrow
Is glorious on that eve,
Dear as the holy sorrow
When good men cease to live,
When brightening ere it die away
Mounts up their altar flame,
Still tending with intenser ray
To Heaven, whence first it came.

Say not it dies, that glory,
'Tis caught unquenched on high,
Those saint-like brows so hoary
Shall wear it in the sky ;
No smile is like the smile of death,
When all good musings past
Rise wafted with the parting breath,
The sweetest thought—the last.

(*Keble*).

EPILOGUE.



WHEN death is coming near,
When thy heart shrinks in fear
And thy limbs fail,
Then raise thy hands and pray
To Him who smooths thy way
Through the dark vale.

Seest thou the eastern dawn ?
Hear'st thou in the red morn
The angel's song ?
O lift thy drooping head,
Thou who in gloom and dread
Hast lain so long.

Death comes to set thee free ;
O meet him cheerily
As thy true friend,
And all thy fears shall cease,
And in eternal peace
Thy penance end.

(Translated from De la Motte Fouquet.)

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